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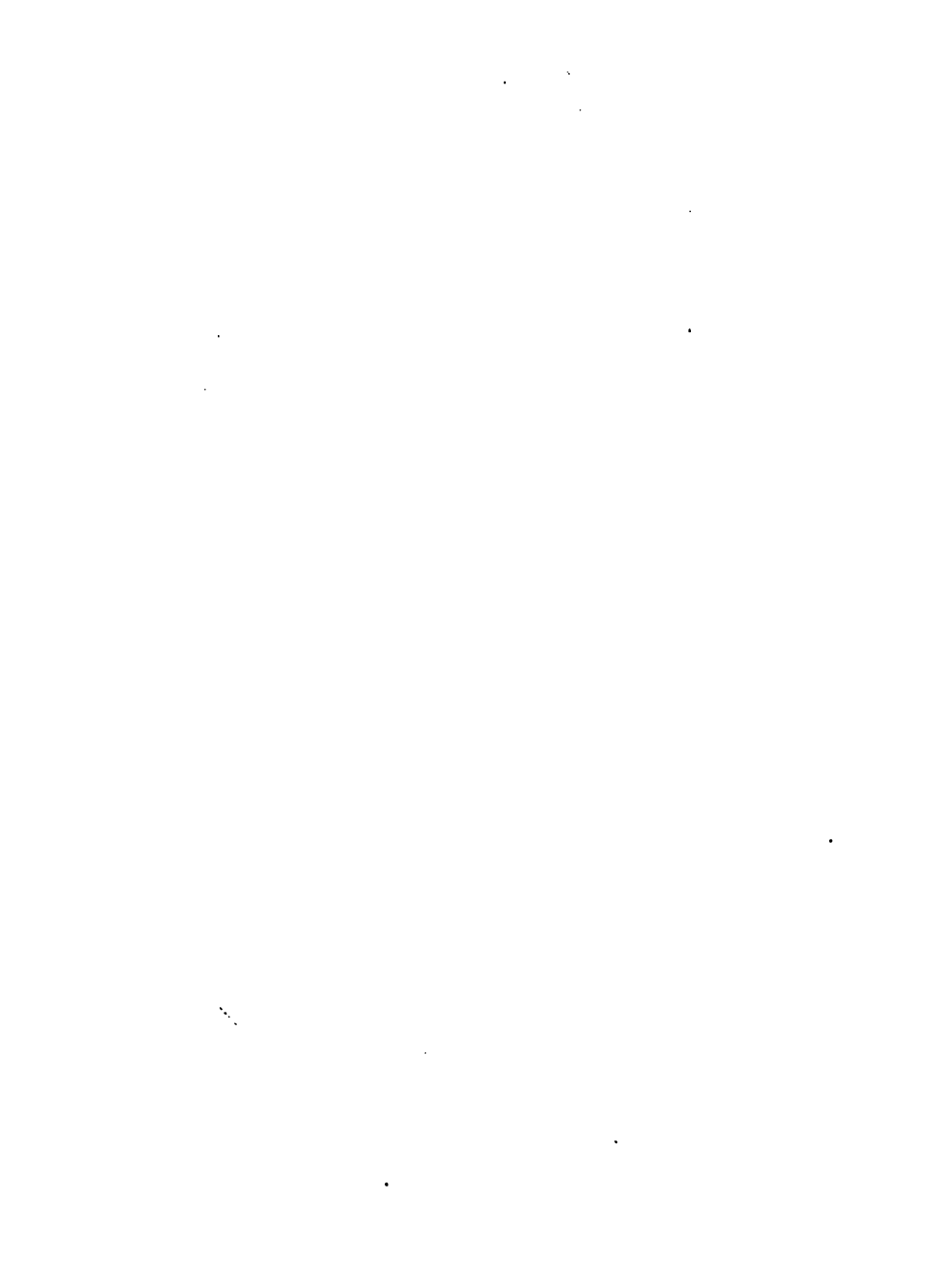
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*A FORTNIGHT'S TOUR*  
*AMONGST THE*  
*ARABS ON MOUNT LEBANON.*

MURRAY AND GIBB, EDINBURGH,  
PRINTERS TO HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.





AN ARAB GENTLEMAN OF DAMASCUS.



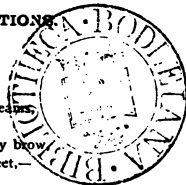
John D. H. DAVIS, President, 1889

**A fortnight's Tour**  
AMONGST THE  
**ARABS ON MOUNT LEBANON,**  
INCLUDING A  
VISIT TO DAMASCUS, BA'ALBEK, THE CEDARS,  
NATURAL BRIDGE, ETC.

By C. G.

WITH FOUR ORIGINAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

'Give praise to God!  
Grey Lebanon, with all thy snows and streams,  
Cedars and pines, and everlasting clouds;  
Bright Hermon, with the day-spring on thy brow  
And silver streamlets leaping round thy feet,—  
Shout forth thy ceaseless praise!'



LONDON:  
JAMES NISBET AND CO., BERNERS STREET.  
1876.

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## PREFACE.



THE Authoress feels that it would be hardly right did she allow this little volume to issue from the press without acknowledging that much of the information it contains has been culled from the pages of other writers.

The valuable and deeply interesting works of Dr. Robinson, Rev. J. L. Porter, Dr. Stewart, and Dr. Thomson have been frequently consulted by her (especially as regards measurements), and have yielded up their quota. For the assistance thus obtained she is considerably indebted to them.

As by far the greater part of this diary was from time to time despatched from the goodly mountains of Lebanon, simply to beguile the leisure hours of a dear invalid sister, no hesitation was felt in freely drawing, from every available source, whatever appeared to bear on the subject under her pen at the moment,—in sometimes merely transcribing a passage, word for word ; at others selecting portions from various authors ; arranging, abridging, and combining these extracts just as best suited her purpose.

Somewhat limited as to time and space, brevity, as far as compatible with perspicuity, together with a strict adherence to truth in every statement, became her principal aim.

Minute descriptions were not attempted, but merely a few slight sketches, with here

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and there a touch marking the chief points of interest, in the hope of awakening in the mind of the reader a desire for further research and investigation of subjects connected with that Land, where there is not a spot on which the eye can rest that is not consecrated ground,—scarcely a rock that comprises not the cave of some holy prophet,—scarcely a valley that is not the vale of some Heaven-anointed king,—scarcely a mountain that may not emphatically be termed the Mount of God;—that sacred ground, which is the stage on which has been enacted the most wondrous, the most important, and the most deeply interesting events of the world's history,—may we not say of Heaven's also?—that Holy Land, which is the chosen

site on which, at some future period more or less remote, will assuredly occur scenes of all-surpassing grandeur, mystery, and sublimity!

*Feb. 24, 1876.*

EXTRACTS  
FROM  
MY JOURNAL IN SYRIA.

---

BEKCOON, MOUNT LEBANON.

*Tuesday, September 1.*

TO-DAY I have been talking to the boys about going to Damascus, Baalbek and the Cedars, studying ways and means, and so forth. They say that the most expeditious and the least expensive way would be to go to Beirut and from there to take the diligence to Damascus. This is a French conveyance, on an excellent French road, and the journey is made in one day: but on the whole we think that the best plan for



me, as I wish to see as much of the country as possible, will be to ride the entire distance on horseback, and that thus we might accomplish the tour in about fifteen days. We can, if we choose to do so, hire a tent at Beirût ; but as that would very materially add to the expense, we have agreed to do without it, and to let our lodging be on the bare ground or in a little wayside hut, just as the case may be. Of course, we must take some blankets and cloaks, etc., which will sufficiently protect us from the cold at this season of the year.

*Wednesday, September 2.*

I am delighted to find that both Mr. and Mrs. B—— most kindly fall in with my wishes and views in regard to the little tour, and even propose that Charley should accompany me, to act as dragoman, guide, escort, etc. They say that I shall require two horses, *i.e.* one for myself and one for C.

B——, a mule for our luggage, provisions, etc., and two men, *i.e.* a muleteer, and also a man to take charge of our horses. The expense, we calculate (everything included), will not exceed eighteen or twenty francs the day. So resolved, if all be well, to start to-morrow, in the afternoon.

This evening I have been learning a little Arabic to talk to my horse, as he won't comprehend English, of course,—*ish, ish*, stop, stop; *dah*, go on, etc. He will be highly amused at my pronunciation, no doubt; but if my Arab steed only condescends to understand and to be ruled by me, I shall not be very seriously disconcerted by that.

*Thursday, September 3.*

Succeeded in hiring two horses, a mule, and two men, the latter having their girdles well furnished with swords, pistols, and dirks. Packed our saddle-bags with all the requi-

sites which we could think of and muster for the journey, not forgetting my nice little spirit-lamp, with the apparatus for making tea, some preserves, sardines, biscuits, hard eggs, etc., with which dear considerate Mrs. B—— kindly provided us. Equipped myself in my cool summer riding-habit of brown Holland, which I made at Leghorn two years ago, purposely for the Holy Land ; a light Leghorn hat with a broad brim, and a yard or two of white muslin wound about it, with long ends down the back, to protect the head and neck from the sun ; put into my pocket a purse, tolerably well supplied with gold Napoleons and half francs.

Behold, dear Maria, 'the manner how we sallied forth' from Bhamdoon, on this third day of September, at about 3 P.M.

' Onward, then, right onward !  
This our watchword still,  
Till we reach the glory  
Of the wondrous hill.

'For the journey girded,  
Haste we on our way.'

We soon entered the high Damascus road, and this stage—its circuitous course—led us over hill and dale, through the most charming scenery imaginable ; the setting sun, and then the rising moon, touching up and heightening the beauty of the prospect to the very last degree of perfection.

We had not, however, advanced any great distance, before, to my extreme consternation, I missed my watch, the New Year's gift of dear Papa, long long ago, as you will recollect. Just as I was on the point of departure from Bhamdoon, my room was full of our poor Arab neighbours of every description, men, women, and children, nearly all of them perfect strangers to me ; and in the confusion and hurry of the moment, it may have escaped my memory to transfer it from its accustomed peg to the watch-pocket of my riding-habit ; or, perchance, after putting it

B

on I may have forgotten to place the guard round my neck, and thus it may have slipped out and fallen on the road. Fancy my vexation at the bare possibility, not to say probability, under these circumstances, of its being lost. We speedily resolved that our best plan would be to despatch Ibrahim, the muleteer, to seek the missing treasure; and I am happy to relate, that no long time elapsed ere my anxiety was relieved, by seeing him return with it, and by receiving it safe and sound from his hands. He had found it, he said, in my own room, hanging at my bed's head, just where I had placed it myself.

The silver orb was sailing high in the heavens ere we halted for the night, at a spot distant about two hours from Khan Mudeirij, where we found a little wayside hut, consisting of only one room. When I entered I was surprised and pleased to find the landlord occupied in reading his large Arabic Bible.

He is a Protestant. He lives quite alone here, far from the dwelling of any other human being, and tells us he finds his Bible so good a companion, that he does not wish for any other to cheer him in his solitude.

As there was no table here, we spread our supper on an old bed, in the corner of the room. Our kind host brought us leben (soured milk), and thin Arabic bread, of which I did not care to partake, although the rest of the party seemed to enjoy it very much. This bread is not like ours, but is in size and shape like a large pancake, though much thinner than any pancake I have ever seen. When first baked and crisp, it is very tolerable; but afterwards, when it becomes stale and tough, I loathe it. The natives roll pieces of it up, spoon fashion, in order to dip up with greater facility their leben and other soft food.

The landlord was exceedingly obliging, and gave us an abundance of nice fruits—melons,

peaches, apples, etc. After we had finished our supper, I ascended, by a very awkward ladder, to the roof or terrace of the house, having decided on making *this* my dormitory, with my saddle for my pillow, leaving C. B—— and my two Arabs, Ibrahim and Seid Ahmed, the old Dreuse sheikh, to the full enjoyment of the little chamber underneath me. It was a splendid moonlight night, the air not cold or chilly; and if I did not sleep much, I at least rested myself, had the benefit of pure, fresh air, quiet, and freedom from the superabundance of lively society, which I should too surely have encountered in the lower regions.

But I suffered much pain from incautiously allowing the beams of the bright full moon to shine directly and broadly on my head and face during the night. An Oriental, I am aware, always considers this especially injurious, and *he* would never venture to sleep with his head exposed to the moonshine. You may

observe an Arab in this country, invariably, before composing himself for his slumbers, most carefully covering his head with his abba (a rough woollen kind of cloak), or with some other part of his clothing ; which I considered a mere whim, not calling to mind, as I ought to have done, that text of sacred Scripture, 'The sun shall not smite thee by day, *nor the moon* by night.' In consequence of my incredulity, my eyes, face, and limbs are now aching miserably, and will, I fear, continue to do so for some little time to come. I believe every one admits that exposure of the head to the *sun* is here most dangerous, being frequently followed by a *coup-de-soleil*, and attended with the most serious consequences—delirium, brain fever, and sometimes even idiotcy through life. The best possible protection from the fierce rays of the Syrian sun seems, after all, to be the red fez, or tarboosh, worn according to the fashion of the natives, with a turban wound round it in



many ample folds. This turban is often formed of a rich silk shawl of considerable value, twenty francs and upwards.

*Friday, September 4.*

In our saddles and off by 2 o'clock A.M. We had a delightful moonlight ride across the plain, and saw the sun rise in all his glory amongst the goodly mountains of Lebanon, bringing out into high relief, and gilding, first one peak, then another, till at length he had poured a flood of golden light over the whole scene.

I must not omit to mention, for the benefit of other travellers, that I found it so excessively cold just before the sun rose, that I heartily wished I had brought a thick woollen jacket with me for the early morning rides.

Breakfasted on the mountain side, near a French hotel, where, for the first time since I have been in Syria, I saw pigs, and lots of them too. Here the water was so bad, and

full of insects, that, after I had taken the pains to prepare the tea, by means of my spirit-lamp, we could not drink it.

After resting the animals for an hour or so, we proceeded on our journey, by far the most toilsome I ever experienced ; fearfully hot, with scorching sun, yet such violent gusts of wind, and clouds of dust, that altogether I could hardly bear up against the fierce Sirocco.

At length we halted by the road side, where a stupendous overhanging rock yet offered us a little welcome strip of shade. But alas ! even that little, tempting, tiny streak was fast diminishing ; every moment it seemed to decrease, and would not much longer afford us any protection from the blazing sun. Here our muleteer fell sick, threw himself on the ground, and lay prostrate there for a length of time. Seid Ahmed, our Dreuse sheikh, did the same, though I don't think he was ill at all. As for myself, I never felt more utterly exhausted in my life, and was fain to follow

their example, and stretch myself at length on the rugged rock, in the only spot of shade I could find.

There was not much of rest or repose, however, here, for the ground on which we lay was so stony, slippery, and sloping, that I could not remain in one position long ; and it was only by fixing my feet firmly against a neighbouring bramble-bush, that I could prevent myself from sliding quite down to the bottom of the rock. The rapidly advancing sun quickly chased me out of even this little place of refuge from his piercing rays. I was obliged to get up, and drag myself round the rock, where, by dint of climbing up to a narrow ledge at some little distance, I could find another welcome speck of shadow.

Circumstances now looked anything but promising. I was perplexed. There was a long and toilsome journey before us ; if the condition of my muleteer did not speedily

and very materially improve, we must of necessity retrace our steps. I was weary and way-worn myself, and confess that for a *few moments* I felt spiritless, and began to think myself a fool for exchanging the green lanes and pleasant shades of my own dear native land, for all this heat, and toil, and trouble. 'Restless mortals,' thought I, 'toil for nought ; bliss in vain on earth is sought.'

I forgot to mention, that a little earlier in the morning, my saddle suddenly twisted round, in consequence of the girths not having been buckled tightly enough, and of course I was thrown from my seat, before I could extricate my foot from the slipper. There was no one near me, not even within the sound of my voice, and had not my little horse stood quietly, I should in all probability have been seriously injured, if not killed. How thankful ought I to be for such a narrow escape ! A few hours later, C. B—— had a tumble, which greatly amused

me. One *always does* cut such a sorry figure on these occasions, all covered with dust and dirt, disordered and tatterdemalioned, startled and pale with vexation at being thus discomfited by one of the brute creation, that laugh I *must*, and heartily too, in spite of the reproachful looks of the poor unfortunate.

Well, after a few hours, we resolved on pursuing our journey, though in rather woeful plight certainly; and at about 5 P.M. we reached Dimas, our halting-place for the night.

Here we found a pleasant, clean-looking house of entertainment for a way-side inn, with a newly whitewashed terrace or verandah in front of the house, and half-way round the little court. They brought us out mats, and spread them on the terrace for us, as I greatly preferred the open air, to the dirt, fleas, smoke, and disagreeable odours of the interior of the dwelling. Then they poured

water over our hands from a little pewter vessel, according to the ancient custom, instead of letting us wash them ourselves in a basin, as we do in England ; and afterwards, when I felt thirsty and asked for water, they brought me the same vessel to drink from. Usually they have a small earthen water-jar with a spout, from which they all drink in turn.

The host and hostess were Moslems. The women soon surrounded me, tired and almost exhausted as I was by the fatigues of the day, and began to examine everything belonging to me that they could contrive to lay hands on ; with *my hair-brush* they wanted to brush their *clothes*, and began working away most energetically. My hat they placed in turn on their own heads,—trying it this way and that, till they imagined they had discovered the most becoming mode of wearing it ; when at length the mistress turned round to me with the most self-com-

placent smile, as if appealing for *my approbation*, which you will readily believe I did not feel much inclined to give her. Then seeing me use *eau de Cologne*, they immediately begged some also, bringing me little cups to put it in. They are all exceedingly fond of perfume—have quite a passion for it. My rings they would insist on taking off *my* fingers to try them on their *own*. They tormented me *much* in various ways, yet to get provoked with them, and to lose one's temper, would only make matters worse ; so I put up with it *all*, and with the best grace I could, seeing that, at such a moment, in case of a quarrel, the odds would be against me. They could do much better without *me* than I could do without *them*, or, at least, without the accommodation they could give me.

Our people bought some nice little chickens and some rice, with which they made soup, very much to their *own* taste, but which proved so unpalatable to me that I could

not touch it. It was like hot water, with a quantity of oily Arabic butter swimming on the top, and rice at the bottom. This savoury mess was served up in two large brown pans. They brought us two rude wooden spoons also, but gave us neither table, chair, plate, dish, knife, nor fork ; so we managed our dinner according to the Arabic fashion, Ibrahim taking the chickens up in his dirty hands, and tearing them to pieces with his fingers, then handing to us such portions as he was pleased to assign us. A tin of fried eggs next appeared, but as they also were deluged with horrid Arabic butter, they proved little more to my taste.

This butter is a very different kind of thing to our nice English butter. The natives put the milk or cream into a sort of bottle, formed of the entire skin of a young buffalo, which is suspended from a high three - legged easel or crotch ; then the women commence their operations, vehe-



mently shaking and wringing, squeezing and kneading this leather bottle till the 'butter has come.' This is their way of churning. They then take it out, and boil or melt it; afterwards it is poured into bottles made of goat-skins. In winter it more closely resembles candied honey than anything else I can imagine, and in summer it is mere oil. They have no other kind of butter, and doubtless it was made thus in the olden time. Solomon says: 'Surely the *churning* of milk bringeth forth butter, and the *wringing* of the nose bringeth forth blood;' the word for *churning* and *wringing* being the same in Hebrew.

Our coffee, which was handed round in tiny cups about the size of our egg-cups, was palatable enough, though thick; they never care to fine it as we do.

About the hour of sunset our host began his devotions on the terrace before us, bowing down to the earth, and kissing it every

two or three minutes, muttering his prayers, and looking fixedly towards the west ; this he continued at intervals, till quite late at night. After our repast was finished, we spread our blankets and quilts on the mats, and had a tolerably good night's rest.

*Saturday, September 5.*

In the saddles early, and had a most delightful ride over the mountains by moonlight. We had hired a guide to show us the shortest way across the mountains before we entered the high Damascus road again ; and very pleasant it was, so free from dust, and the air so fresh and bracing. Several fine athletic mountaineers joined our party as we proceeded ; and so fast did they walk, that our horses had no little difficulty in keeping pace with them. Amongst the rest, a most intelligent Arab soldier, who served under the Turkish Government, and who kept up a most ani-

mated conversation with C. B—— the whole way. Sometimes he would caper on before, frolicsome as a young lamb, and then wait till we came up to him.

These mountaineers lead the most frugal lives imaginable, and yet how *strong*, how *active*, how full of energy they are! how buoyant their spirits!

After we had entered the high Damascus road again, there was a sudden and entire change of scenery, yet exceedingly beautiful.

Here we had an abundance of trees, silver poplars, etc., and the hedgerows, with their blackberry and wild-rose bushes, the flowers in the streamlets beneath, too, the watercresses, brooklime, etc., were so exactly the same as those we meet with in England, that I could easily have imagined myself riding into some country town in our own neighbourhood.

Do you recollect, dear Maria, a tall pink flower, that when children we used to call

gooseberry pudding, on account of the fancied resemblance of its scent? Well, *that* grows most abundantly here in the streams near Damascus, as well as a number of others *precisely* the same, and not one bit finer than ours, notwithstanding the difference of climate, at which I am surprised. Of course we find many flowers, plants, and trees *here*, which do *not* grow *wild* in England. I saw, too, growing round the springs by the road side, a great deal of that pretty, delicate little fern, which you used to have in your conservatory, near the drawing-room door, and of which I sent you a sprig from Pompeii.

Our road ran close by the lovely river Barada, serpentine, silvery, rapid, foaming and gushing over its rocky bed, and fringed with trees in every variety, clad in their freshest and most luxuriant foliage. This was such a contrast, such a perfect contrast, to the rocky, stony, barren mountains we had lately been travelling over, that I could

hardly feast my eyes sufficiently on the enchanting scene before us.

Here we met with the Hed-Hood or Hoopoe, a rare and beautiful little bird, with a large crown or top-knot, which it expanded or laid flat on its head at pleasure, as it kept hopping and fluttering on before us, almost within arm's reach. They say it is good to eat, but I should prefer the pleasure of *seeing* to *eating* it.

At about two hours from Damascus, where there is a little hotel most picturesquely situated on the banks of the river, we halted for breakfast, seating ourselves outside, on a rustic bridge thrown over the river, the drooping willows forming an agreeable shadow for us.

As we approach Damascus, we have a river flowing on either side of the road, as if to escort us into the city. The Barada, or golden-flowing Abana of the ancients, and the Feigie. How beautiful they ap-

peared, dancing, leaping, and sparkling in the early morning sun ! The shadows of the tall trees across the road gave us a pleasant, chequered pathway of light and shade. All nature seemed bright and joyous, as if participating in my delight at the accomplishment of my long hoped-for, but long delayed visit to this ' Pearl of the East,' this ' diamond encircled by emeralds,' as an Eastern poet has described it ; *this*, the *loveliest* of the four terrestrial paradises. ' Gorgeous are thy palaces, fragrant are thy gardens, sweet are thy waters, O Damascus, thou Queen of the East ! '

Who can wonder that Naaman should have exclaimed in his wrath, ' Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel ? may I not wash in *them*, and be clean ? '

As we came nearer the city, we passed through beautiful meadows of fresh green grass, the first I had seen for many a long

day ; and numbers of people were dragging their rich Turkey carpets on it, in order to clean them, others were washing large pieces of linen in the rivers. I saw here too, in swampy places, a multitude of frogs—the first I have met with in Syria.

On getting my first view of the city, a slight feeling of disappointment, or rather of dissatisfaction, stole over me ; and the same has been the case, I believe, with many others. It is not the ancient, the venerable Damascus we had pictured to our imaginations, the Damascus of Abraham's days, that greets our eyes, but a host of modern Turkish domes and minarets that intrude themselves on our sight. I knew that *in fact* they must be there before I saw them, for, alas ! it is now a Turkish city ; yet my mind's eye had never painted them there before, and they but ill accord with one's preconceived ideas of *Damascus*, the very oldest city in the world now flourishing.

As we passed over the bridge, a pretty young girl, with pink, henna-stained nails, came up to speak to me.

We threaded our way through the narrow, tortuous, dirty streets, with gutters running down the *centre*, and heaps of rubbish of every description remaining just as it had been cast out from the dwellings. Amongst the rest, here and there, the half-decayed carcass of some animal, with all the refuse of the kitchen; putrid vegetables, dust, etc., and every conceivable abomination. Now we wended our way onward, through dingy alleys, and low, half-dark arches, till at length we came to a small, mean-looking doorway, where we stopped and dismounted. It was the residence of our friends.

Passing with some little difficulty through a narrow, winding passage, half filled with stones and rubbish, behold! we suddenly emerged into a splendid, spacious, marble court, with finely polished tessellated pave-



ment, with a magnificent fountain playing in the centre, and surrounded by flower-borders, filled with a variety of aromatic shrubs, and redolent with the perfume of fragrant flowers ; the orange, lemon, citron, the myrtle, jessamine, and passion-flower, flourishing most luxuriantly. Round this court are ranged all the apartments, but without having any communication with each other. Our Saviour's words occurred to me, 'In my Father's house are many mansions,' etc. Some of these are open summer alcoves, or *lewâns* ; a beautifully ornamented arch supporting the front wall, the ceilings and walls richly arabesqued, all gold and glitter, with a raised dais and divan, covered with a profusion of soft cushions, of spotless white, inviting one to repose, and looking the very perfection of comfort.

I was forcibly reminded of the Moorish Alhambra at our Crystal Palace, and the Court of the Lions.

Well, we crossed the court, and were ushered into the reception-room, far surpassing all we had hitherto seen in magnificence.

The part we first entered was the atabeh, or lower end, with its polished marble pavement, and sparkling fountain, its ceiling being upwards of forty feet high. The upper half of the apartment was raised about a foot, spread with rich Turkey carpets, and surrounded on three sides by the divan, a low continuous couch, covered with rich Damascus silk, and having a multitude of cushions, of various sizes, shapes, and colours, tastefully disposed over it. Some were of beautifully embroidered muslin, others of glossy satin. The mosaic walls and arabesque ceilings were of the most gorgeous description. The windows were without glass, for the most part, but the shutters were so artfully contrived, and made to correspond so exactly with the pattern of the wall, that when closed they could hardly be perceived.

Here my curiosity was excited by several inscriptions on the walls in Arabic ; and on inquiring the meaning of one of the most conspicuous, was told it was 'I PUT MY TRUST IN GOD;' a most appropriate motto.

I was conducted to the upper end, and invited to take my seat on the divan. After a short time one of the sons of Dr. M—— entered,—a fine intelligent young man, of about eighteen or twenty, who spoke French fluently, though he did not understand much English. He was dressed quite in the Syrian style, with graceful flowing robes.

His father came in soon after, and took his seat on the divan,—a most venerable, benevolent old gentleman, eminent both as a Christian and an author, and entitled to our especial respect and consideration, on account of the persecutions and sufferings he endured with so much fortitude, at the period of the last dreadful massacre of the Christians at Damascus. I much regretted

that I could only converse with him through the medium of an interpreter, as he spoke nothing but Arabic.

No long time elapsed before the ladies of the family made their appearance, and gave me a most cordial and hearty welcome. Although they had partially adopted the European costume, they wore neither stockings nor shoes, but on their bare feet had the ancient kubkobs,—a kind of clog, peculiar to Damascus, which is raised from the ground by upright pieces of wood, sometimes a foot high, so that it seems almost like walking on stilts. They are beautifully inlaid with mother-of-pearl and silver, and the strap over the foot is of red morocco, embroidered with gold and silver threads. These kubkobs they drop off, of course, before they ascend the upper portion of the apartment, on which is placed the divan ; the men, also, always leave their shoes at the entrance of the sitting-room, wherever it may be. This

they scrupulously do, though they keep on the head-dress ; a custom which appears strange to us, the very reverse being etiquette with Europeans. Yet on a moment's consideration, we shall see how necessary and proper it is, as they sit with their feet under them on the divan, rug, or mat. Shoes would make a most uncomfortable seat, besides soiling the clothes and the couch.

It was interesting to observe the profound respect with which the head of the house is treated by every member of his family. Neither of his sons presumed to approach him without making an obeisance, so lowly and submissive, that it seemed expressive of the deepest reverence ; even before ascending the dais, laying the hand on the breast, inclining the body forward, almost to the ground, touching the forehead and lips, and then, when they drew near, kissing his hand most devoutly.

I began to think that after all there must

be some mistake, and that I had entered the palace of an Eastern prince.

After conversing with us very pleasantly for a little while, they most considerately invited me to repose and refresh myself after the fatigues of the morning's ride ; and in order that I might do so the more effectually, they would insist on leaving me sole possessor of this luxurious divan, etiquette, I suppose, demanding that they should cede to the guest the best apartment, though I confess that it would have been much more in accordance with my English taste had they conducted me to a snug little bedroom ; for, weary and way-worn as I was, I could not by any means coax 'nature's soft nurse' to indulge me with a visit here ; so at length, finding how utterly unavailing with that capricious dame were all my persuasive powers, I proposed a walk into the city.

Our friends kindly sent a Janissary with us to show us the bazaars, as I wished to make a

few purchases. In these I was a little disappointed, after reading Murray's florid description of them ; but perhaps as his book was written before the massacre, and my visit is made after, that may account for the difference.

I succeeded in buying some tolerably good saddle-bags and a few other things, without paying much more than their value.

I sadly wanted a warm woollen jacket or shawl for the morning and evening rides ; but after many fruitless efforts to deal with these gentry, and having already expended far too much time, strength, and patience on the matter, I gave it up in disgust. ¶ They wanted more than double or treble the value of everything, so I resolved on doing without the much coveted shawl.

I was astonished at the abundant supply they have here of everything one requires for travelling, and not a little amused to think how much needless trouble I had given my-

self on coming out, by getting such stores of various things which I fancied there would be difficulty in procuring in the East.

On my return, I felt half puzzled when the lady of the house asked me at what time I would like my dinner ; but so complimentary are they, that they urge their guest to name the hour.

The repast was served up much in our own style, and to my surprise I was placed at the head of the table, the mistress of the house sitting beside me on my right hand. Such is etiquette here. How different are manners and customs in different parts of the world ! What should we think of this in England ?

You will readily imagine that we had a tolerably large party assembled round the social board, when I tell you that, according to the ancient custom of the country, all the members of the family, for three or four generations, reside under one roof, and in one



common household,—sons with their wives and children ; daughters with their husbands and children.

In the evening we sat in the *lewân* or alcove, where the family were assembled even to the fourth generation. The mother of our kind hostess was the most agreeable, lively old lady imaginable ; her infant granddaughter (great-grand-daughter to the old lady), the finest baby I ever beheld, with large intensely black eyes, and a profusion of curling raven hair.

Here I had an opportunity of observing that many of the ladies had their toe-nails stained, as well as those of the fingers,—a fashion I by no means admire, as it always gives me the idea of a bruise or injury of some kind, instead of being an ornament.

As I was excessively tired, I begged permission to withdraw at an early hour to my sleeping apartment, hoping here at least to enjoy a good night's rest.

The nice, clean-looking bed, which was spread on carpets, seemed to invite me to the repose I so much needed. 'Twas a mere delusion! Never shall I forget the experience of that long, wretched night. I had hardly closed my eyes before I was roused by countless myriads of the pre-occupants of my couch; and by the aid of my matches and wax taper, I was enabled to reconnoitre the enemy. Alas! alas! there were thousands upon thousands; bugs large and small, fleas without number. Skirmishing would have been worse than useless with such fearful odds against me, so I resolved on a hasty retreat, and preferred passing the night seated on my camp-stool, as far removed as possible from the scene of action.

*Sunday, September 6.*

Feeling more dead than alive, I made my toilette as well as I could under existing circumstances; but my wash-hand basin, or

rather that which stood in place of that much to be desired article, being of brass, none of the cleanest ; moreover, having a moveable strainer at the bottom, the jug containing the water also of the same metal, I could not make up my mind to wash my face in it. These vessels, however, serve admirably the purpose for which they were originally intended, namely, for pouring water over the hands.

After morning service at the Protestant chapel, some friends called and asked me to make a sketch of the scholars at the Blind School here, which I most readily consented to do to-morrow morning, D.V.

In the evening we went to see Mrs. Bowen Thompson's school. There is to be an examination on Tuesday next, which I should much like to attend, but cannot well do so, on account of the expense of keeping my horses, men, and mules. The school-house here is not very large, but it looks so neat and cheerful, clean, orderly, and

well-arranged, that I felt reluctant to quit it.

How interesting is this work of educating the Orientals in which Mrs. Bowen Thompson is engaged ; on how many blank sheets is she tracing the fair features of truth ! Momentous indeed does the task of instruction appear, when we consider that those lines, whether false or true, once engraved on this *tabula rasa* of the infant mind, can hardly if ever be effaced ; but will remain through life, shedding their influence, either for good or evil, over a circle more or less extended.

‘ Yes, our *earliest* are our *most important years* ;  
The mind, impressible and soft, *imbibes* with *ease*,  
And *copies* what she sees and hears ;  
And through life’s labyrinth retains the clue  
That education gives her, false or true.’

We ascended to the terrace or roof of the school-house, which commands a fine view of the city and surrounding country. The mountain ridge of Anti-Lebanon stretching

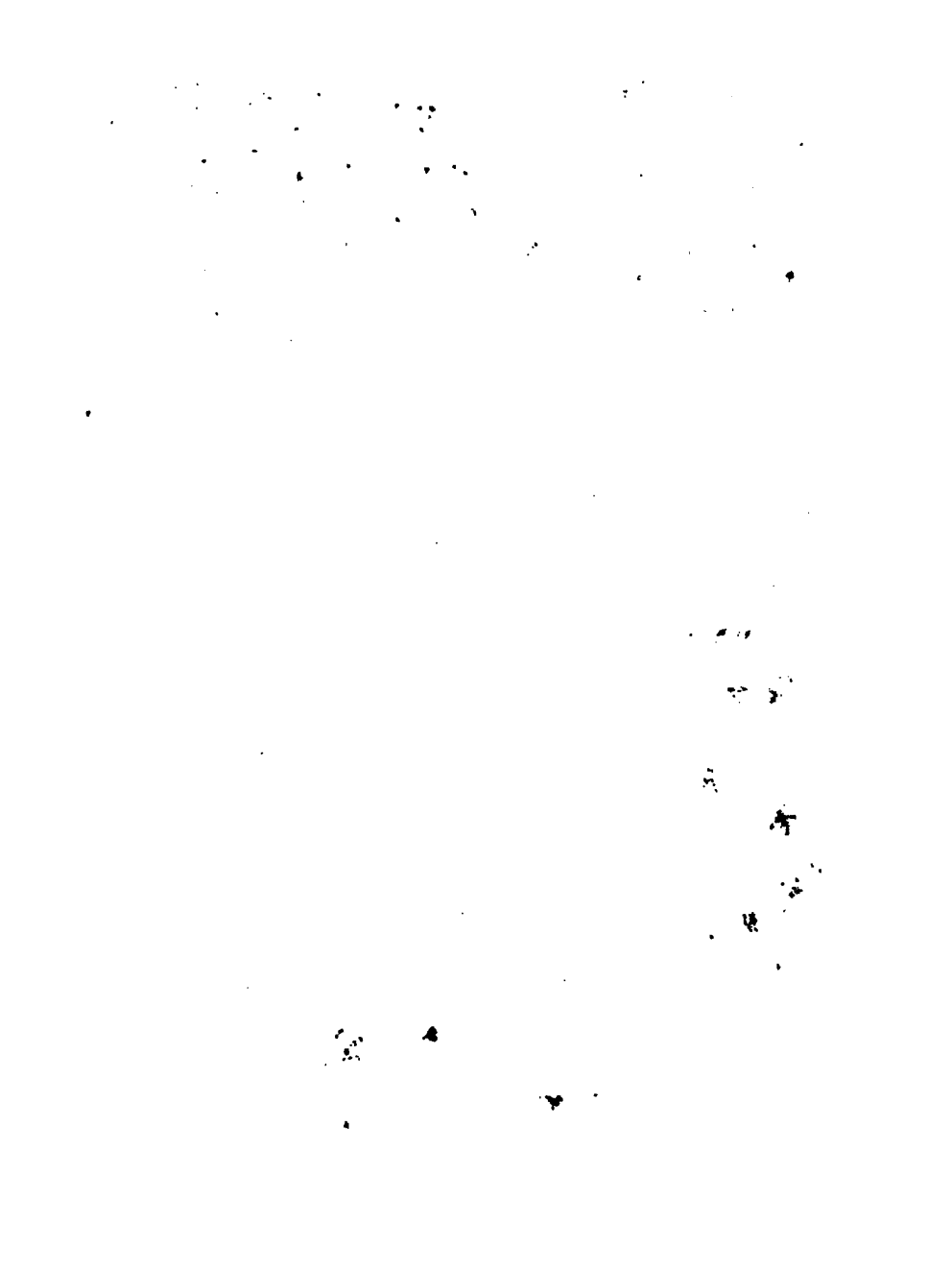
away in the distance, peaks of every form and height; how rich their purple tint, how soft and lovely as seen from afar, yet how rugged, rocky, and toilsome for the traveller!

The majestic Hermon, too, towering high above the rest in isolated grandeur, with his stern cold brow and locks of snow, from whence it is said the luxurious Sidonians formerly fetched a supply to cool their summer beverages.

The appearance of the city is, however, by no means improved by getting this bird's-eye view of it. Nothing, in fact, can look meaner than the rough mud walls, and ricketty upper stories, projecting so far over the streets, that in many places opposite neighbours might almost shake hands from their lattices; much like the quaint old houses of Chester.

*Monday, September 7.*

Passed a better night, as some of the ladies





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of the family had most kindly given me up their own sleeping apartment. The bed was spread on rich Turkey carpets, on the platform or upper end of the room; the coverlet or quilt very beautiful, of crimson satin, bordered with yellow, and lined with white.

At 10 A.M. Mr. M—— called and took me to the Blind School, where I stayed till 4, sketching some of the poor blind scholars. I had a good deal of trouble in grouping them up, some objecting to sit near others, on account of the difference in their religion. One pretty fair-haired Christian woman, especially, would by no means consent to be placed beside an old Moslem, as I had arranged that she should be; so I was obliged to yield to their prejudices, and do the best I could with such inflexible models. Well, when I called to mind the horrible massacre of the Christians here in 1860, not above eight years ago, I could

hardly blame my inexorable model ; at any rate, I could not marvel that her feelings should stand rather to the north of friendly towards these Moslems. The grace of God alone can enable us to love our enemies.

Mr. Mott read and prayed in Arabic with them whilst I was at work, and afterwards gave them an abundance of delicious grapes and thin Arabic bread ; but they got very tired of sitting still so long. My poor little ragged boy, in particular, was most restless. Mrs. Bowen Thompson, with many of her Oriental friends, called in, and she kindly invited me to visit her schools at Zahleh on my way back to Bhamdoon. Zahleh is the largest village on the Lebanon, having about eleven thousand inhabitants, nearly all Christian. It is beautifully situated in a picturesque glen or basin, round which the pretty whitewashed houses are ranged in terraces, and through the midst the river flows between borders of tall poplars. The

approach to it is splendid, and the views around it are truly sublime.

*Tuesday, September 8.*

Early springing from my bed of sloth, I enjoyed a long and most interesting walk round Damascus, in this cool and silent hour, accompanied by Mr. Salam and C. B——. We visited many charming spots. There was one in particular which I think will ever remain engraved on memory's tablet, though time would not allow of my reproducing it on paper. It is a place where several brooks (parts of the Abana and Pharpar) meet. We stood in the centre of a grassy plot, completely encircled by these golden-flowing rivers. The freshness and beauty of the scene I can hardly describe; the early morning sun glistening on the waters, which were dancing and singing around us, whilst the luxuriant weeping-willows laved their long branches in the

limpid streams ; the emerald grass, on which the dewdrops yet lingered, as if bespangled by countless numbers of diamonds and pearls. But time flies ; we may not loiter in this enchanting scene, for others even more interesting await us.

The wall from which St. Paul was let down in a basket through a window, and escaped, I saw and touched ; the road he journeyed I traversed also for a few paces. Then we entered a Turkish cemetery, so vast as to be almost like a forest of tombstones, and strange-looking oblong mounds of whitewashed mud or brick, each having an upright stone at the head, and a cavity for water beside it. Had we visited the place on a Thursday or Friday, we might have seen troops of Moslem women weeping, praying, and, if truth must be told, gossiping, each with a branch of myrtle, or palm branch, and a vessel of water, which she brings with her as an offering to the shade

of the departed. Here, I believe, lie the remains of no less than three of Mohammed's wives, and also of his granddaughter, Fati-meh, with many of the greatest warriors and statesmen of Moslem history. Interspersed with the neat, trim graves are many cupolas and fantastic wooden structures, which have a rather graceful and pleasing effect.

On our return to the city, we called on a wealthy Arab family, whose residence even surpassed that of our friend Dr. M—— in magnificence. Yet all in the same style,—marble court, fountains, the apartments all opening into the court, walls and ceilings richly ornamented in mosaic and arabesque. We were conducted to the lewân or open apartment, where, by the polite attention of the lady and gentleman of the house, coffee was served in their tiny China cups, set in holders of beautiful silver filigree work, in shape exactly like our egg-cups. Then came

the argelehs, for smoking, and I was invited to join them in their favourite recreation. The argeleh is very beautiful, with its long flexible tube, sometimes fifteen feet in length, made of bright - coloured leather, corded with silver wire ; and the kazzazeh, or large bottle of water, to which it is attached, composed of thick cut glass, richly inlaid with gold. Altogether it is a most elegant apparatus, and I could not help admiring exceedingly the way in which the lady made the water in the kazzazeh bubble up, just as if it was boiling at full gallop. I think it would be long ere I could manage to drive the smoke down the tube and through the water, as she did ; and yet there was not the slightest apparent effort on her part.

Bidding adieu to our friends, we proceeded on our way homewards ; and the Great Mosque fortunately being open, we got a good view of the interior, although not permitted to enter. The whole structure, in-

cluding cloisters, courts, and all, covers a quadrangle one hundred and sixty-three yards long, by one hundred and eight wide. The interior of the Harem occupies a space of four hundred and thirty-one feet, by one hundred and twenty-five. Here the walls and piers of the transept, at least the lower part of them, are encrusted with various-coloured marbles, in beautiful patterns ; the floor is of tessellated marble, covered with Persian carpets ; and there is a fine dome, fifty feet in diameter, and one hundred and twenty feet high, resting on four enormous piers.

Near this, to the east, is the sanctum of the building, or kubbeh, carved and gilt, but small ; and underneath is said to be a crypt, in which the head of John the Baptist is preserved in a casket of gold.

Historians relate, that after the capture of the city, Khaled insisted on entering the sacred cave ; that he descended, and found a



small vault, with an altar, on which was laid this casket ; upon it was an inscription in Greek to the following effect :—‘ This casket contains the head of John the Baptist, son of Zachariah.’

There is not a shadow of doubt that on this spot once stood a heathen temple of great extent and beauty, which was afterwards appropriated by the Christians, and subsequently became the most magnificent mosque in the Mohammedan empire ; so that the *site* has been occupied from the earliest ages by the *chief shrine* of the Damascenes.

It is an interesting thought, that probably on this very spot Naaman deposited the two mules’ burden of earth brought from Palestine ; and that in reference to this shrine he uttered the singular prayer, ‘ In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant, that when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon :

when I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing' (2 Kings v. 18). Probably it was here also that King Ahaz saw the altar, the beauty of which pleased him so much, that he had a similar one constructed at Jerusalem.

One of the three minarets of the mosque is called the Minaret of Jesus. It is two hundred and fifty feet high; and a Moslem tradition affirms that Jesus when He comes to judge the world will first descend on this minaret; then entering the mosque, will call before Him men of every sect; the names of the faithful (Moslems only, of course) will be read out of the Book of Life.

On the southern side of the mosque, may be seen from the roof of a bazaar a richly ornamented triple gateway, the sculptured scrolls and foliage of which are not inferior in execution to those of the Temple of the Sun at Ba'albek. Over the central arch there is a cross, and the following inscription

in Greek, 'Thy kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.' How strange that this should have remained *here*, on one of the holiest shrines of Islamism, for one thousand two hundred years! May the time soon arrive when it will be an appropriate motto for this noble structure!

In passing down the adjacent line of bazaars, I was amused by watching the manufacturers of the ornamental pattens or kubkobs, and chests, ply their busy trade; squatting all the while, mallet and chisel in hand, toes serving for a vice. The chests, which are for holding the wedding robes and jewels, are made of walnut-wood, and are richly inlaid with mother-of-pearl; for, 'Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire?' (Jer. ii. 32.)

As to the *walking* dress of the Oriental belles, I cannot say much in praise of it. They certainly have a strange, spectre-like

appearance in the streets, wrapped in their white izar, a kind of loose linen mantle, or rather sheet, which envelops them from head to foot, excepting the face, which is also completely concealed by a thick, mask-like veil, worn under the izar, and which is generally made of some black material, with a large coloured pattern running over it, and with holes cut for the eyes : hideous enough is the *tout-ensemble*. You may see the ladies together, in groups of three or four, but *never* accompanied by a gentleman. The head-dress of the ladies, however, indoors, is exceedingly tasteful and pretty ;—a bouquet of real flowers, fresh and fair from the garden, a cord and tassels of twisted silk and silver or gold, interspersed with pearls and jewels, of course. Sometimes they paint their eyes, but this I have not often seen amongst the higher classes,—that is, they blacken the *eyelids* and *brows* with kohl, so as to lengthen and reduce the eye in appearance to an

almond shape, which is thought to give peculiar brilliancy to the eye, and to impart a languishing and amorous cast to the countenance. Brides are, I believe, thus painted, and their cheeks coloured. The kohl is intensely black, and is made from burnt almond shells, frankincense, or antimony. The meel or probe with which they apply it is formed of ivory-wood or silver, something like a modelling tool in miniature, and the paint or powder is kept in a little phial, encased in a sort of cushion. I had the mukhuly, or apparatus, in my hand the other day, and thought it looked much like a small square pincushion. This practice must be of very ancient date, as such painted eyes are often found on the very oldest of the Egyptian tombs. The same custom prevailed also at Nineveh about three thousand years ago; and in Babylon it must have been the fashion even amongst the men, Nanarus, one of the governors or tributary kings under

the Medes, having been reproached by an enemy for his effeminacy, in having his eyes underlined with stibium, like a woman.

But a truce to this discussion on eye-painting, for here we are at the door of our friend's residence. The magnificent Arab baby awaits me in the lewân, where I am to take her portrait. I intend to paint a highly-finished miniature from it on my return to Bhamdoon ; though I fear I shall never do justice to these Oriental eyes, lustrous, large, and black as they are, and left just as nature formed them, without the addition of either kohl or stibium.

Well ! I have accomplished my hasty sketch. Our fiery steeds are already at the door, so we must say farewell to our kind and hospitable friends, and pursue our journey *en route* for Ba'albek, of world-wide celebrity.

Charley, not forgetting that Damascus is famous for sweets, or perhaps calling to mind

one of the twenty-four recipes against low spirits which Sidney Smith once gave a lady, has, I am glad to find, furnished my saddle-bags with an ample supply ; and as nature abhors a vacuum, the interstices are filled up with little pine-nuts. Thus, when the road is dull and uninteresting, we may not altogether unprofitably beguile the way.

Well, once more, and yet again, ere I quit thee, fair perennial city, I bid thee farewell ! Bright Queen of the East, sparkling with diamonds and emeralds, ne'er shall I look upon thy like again ! Old as history itself, yet possessing all the vigour and freshness of youth, generations of cities have in succession risen up around thee, and passed away. *Thou* hast flourished under every form of government, under every change of dynasty,—prospered alike under Persian despotism, Grecian anarchy, and Roman patronage. Thou dost not only exist, but prosper still, despite Turkish oppression and misrule.

Most devoutly is it to be desired that the time may soon come, when from *this* detestable thralldom thou shalt be freed. Then, oh then, wouldst thou indeed be 'fresh as the breath of spring, blooming as thine own rosebud, fragrant as thine own orange-flower.'

The country through which we passed after leaving the city continued for some time undulating, cultivated, wooded, and beautiful,—a succession of hill and dale. But ere long we lost our way. It grew late, and after wandering about 'where wilds immeasurably spread seemed lengthening as we went,' making our way slowly and with difficulty, over loose stones and slippery rocks, we entered a narrow ravine, and emerging from it, we suddenly found ourselves in a glen of extraordinary beauty and fertility, full of foliage and verdure, with sparkling waters gushing around us, an extensive orchard of pomegranates skirting our path, and tempting us with its splendid and delicious fruit.



This was not the spot at which we had intended to halt for the night, though certainly one so rich in natural beauty I have rarely, if ever, beheld.

We were weary and way-worn ; the moon was already sailing high in the heavens, so we agreed to rest here, in the little village Kefr-ez-Zeit ; and finding a house, in the court of which we could spread our mats, my party prepared our evening meal, with such provisions as the place afforded. At my urgent request they visited the adjacent pomegranate orchard, and gathered by moonlight an abundance of the very finest fruit of the kind I have ever seen or tasted. I felt half reluctant to cut the brilliant scarlet rind, yet the rich, juicy, carmine-coloured berries within proved irresistible, and were equally beautiful. How cool and refreshing they were after all the fatigue and anxiety of the day !

As usual, Arabs large and small, old and young of both sexes, crowded round us,

laughing and staring. I had no little difficulty in keeping them off our terrace. Had I not been too tired I would have sketched a group, as they stood round their blazing fire in the centre of the court, they looked so picturesque—their costume, their brown complexions, and dark piercing eyes.

*Wednesday, September 9.*

We rose early, mounted our steeds, and travelled on for some little distance beside the pomegranate orchard, clusters of the lovely star-like blossoms and bright green leaves hanging over our path, almost within reach, and the delicious fruit seemed inviting me to pluck. Many a longing lingering look did I cast behind me, as we quitted this fresh green vale, with its abundance of pleasant fruits. Our way led us through the most charming and romantic scenery imaginable. One view in particular I longed to sketch, where there was a fine

arch thrown over the foaming river, but I could not prevail on my party to stop; it was excessively cold in this dell; they said we must push on.

As we passed by a field of Indian corn, my muleteers were tempted to pluck a few stalks of the golden grain, to gratify the craving appetite of our animals, little dreaming that the owner was at hand. Suddenly, however, and most unexpectedly, down he rushed from the hillside, in furious rage at their audacity. We could only appease him by making a liberal compensation in the shape of piastres. This is the first time we have met with an unfriendly Arab. Generally speaking, they would consider it rather an insult were we to offer to pay for such a trifle.

At length, to my no small satisfaction, my people were content that I should break my fast, as we had reached a situation on the mountain which they deemed favourable,

there being a fine tree to afford us shade, and a limpid fountain from which to quench our thirst. Here we met with a kind old Arab, of most patriarchal appearance, who volunteered to fetch us new milk, and new honey in the comb. This, with the pomegranates we had brought from Kefr-ez-Zeit, served to make up a capital breakfast.

After resting ourselves and our animals awhile, we proceeded on our way, through scenery even more picturesque than any we had passed through before. There were many splendid waterfalls and rapid gushing brooks, with rustic bridges thrown over them,—fine subjects for the pencil of an artist!

Arriving at Sugheira, we halted for the night in a very superior little inn of the kind; and whilst our usual dinner of chicken, rice, and fried eggs was being prepared, I had time to walk out and amuse myself, by watching the thrashing or pounding of the thistles into chaff, for here on the Lebanon the thrifty

people turn even these to account. They are pretty sure of finding an abundant crop of thistles everywhere, without the trouble of culture, and by beating them up into a very fine kind of chaff, they manage to provide their animals with a very tolerable food. Necessity, they say, is the mother of invention. During nearly nine months in the year there is hardly a blade of grass, or, indeed, a particle of verdure of any kind, to be found on these mountains. In the valleys which are watered by the brooks and streamlets, and also lower down, towards Beirût, of course it is different, and there are many verdant spots all the year round.

The thistles were placed in a mound or heap in the centre of the threshing-floor, and a man, standing on a rude kind of sledge, was driving round and round until he had reduced the chaff almost to a powder. This sledge or slab is called a *mowrej*, and has bits of rough lava attached to it under-

neath, in order to render the operation of threshing the more effective. It was a droll and novel sight for me. Doubtless to such implements as these Isaiah alludes when he says, 'I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument, having teeth.' Some of these thistles when growing are remarkably fine and beautiful, and of a variety of different shades and colours, yellow, sky-blue, purple, and I saw one of a deep rich crimson. Perhaps, however, the sky-blue one, which I call a thistle, does not in reality belong to the thistle tribe, although closely resembling it as far as leaves and stem go. The blossom is formed exactly like the teasel so common in our hedgerows, only instead of being egg-shaped, it is a round ball.

After dinner I explored the interior of the dwelling, and finding it so much more commodious and clean than any of the houses at which we had stopped before, the bedding, too, in good condition, I resolved on

sleeping inside to-night, and leaving my party to the enjoyment of the terrace. I did not find this arrangement, however, any improvement on my usual plan, for to my no small astonishment in the night, I discovered that the other end of the room was occupied by the whole family,—men, women, and children. These people were much more avaricious and overreaching in their charges than any we had hitherto met with ; in consequence, I suppose, of the number of rich English tourists, who rest here on their way to and from Ba'albek, throwing about their money and paying an exorbitant price for everything. We paid reasonably, and they were dissatisfied.

*Thursday, September 10.*

I performed the duties of the toilette by the light of a little primitive earthen lamp,—just such a one as I used to see in some of the old shops in Rome, tied together in strings, at a baioccho each,—and

was ready to resume my journey by 3 A.M. I believe we followed the line of the old road from Damascus to Ba'albek. We went over a high and very steep ridge of the mountain by a zigzag path, then descending a dreary slope, we came to a cheerful little village, through which we passed, and where some kind Syrian girls refreshed us and our thirsty animals from a fountain of the purest water, which was gushing up in the very centre of the place. Very acceptable it was, for by this time the sun was high, and we had not breakfasted.

The columns came into view at a considerable distance, and appeared to me quite small. I felt a little disappointed and ready to exclaim, Can *this* be *Ba'albek*, the most imposing structure of Syria? We still rode on, hour after hour, seeming to get no nearer, and the temples no larger. The fact is, that the exquisite proportions of the columns give them the aspect of



such airy lightness, even at a little distance, that one can scarcely credit their vast magnitude till actually standing beside them. Then, indeed, but not till then, the mind is overwhelmed by the view, and words can hardly express its feelings of admiration and wonder.

At about one o'clock we arrived at the village of Ba'albek, and took up our quarters at a comparatively comfortable little khan close by the ruins. The ancient city, 'Helio-polis,' was encompassed by substantial walls two miles in circumference, and with towers at intervals. The modern village occupies but a corner of the old site, and consists of not more than a hundred houses, huddled together without regard to order or convenience.

Now for a cup of delicious tea, some fresh eggs, and splendid grapes. A walk of ten minutes, stumbling over huge stones, leaping over or wading through gushing waters, climbing dilapidated walls, entering

by an arch, through which I am dragged up, and, all obstacles surmounted, I stand amongst the far-famed ruins of the three Temples of Ba'albek, Heliopolis.

Well! this is indeed one of the wonders of the world. See to what Lilliputian dimensions I am suddenly reduced beside two of these gigantic standing columns! There are six of them. Only fancy when there were twenty such! Then look at those prostrate columns, those huge fragments of fourteen feet thick. I almost shudder at their colossal dimensions. And now I stand in the centre of the broad platform, and in front of the main entrance to the Great Temple, *Τεῖχος*. No disappointment, *now*! I am lost in amazement and admiration!

Popular tradition assigns the construction to Solomon, though more probably the sub-structure of this Great Temple supported a magnificent edifice at a much earlier period. It *may* date back as far as the time of Joshua.

These ruins stand unrivalled for gorgeousness of decoration, combined with colossal magnitude ; surpassing in *dimensions* the temples of Athens ; exceeding beyond comparison, as regards the symmetry of the columns and the richness of sculptured friezes and portals, the wonderful temples of Karnak. The temples of Ba'albek are amongst the *chefs-d'œuvre* of Grecian architecture ; the style is Corinthian, the capitals designed and executed with remarkable artistic skill. The substructures alone of the Great Temple rank high amongst the wonders of the world. Here are, perhaps, three of the very largest blocks of stone that were ever placed in a wall by man. I did not measure them myself, but, according to Dr. Robinson, one is sixty-four feet long, another sixty-three feet eight inches, and the third sixty-three, the height of each thirteen feet, their breadth the same. These enormous stones must have been transported a mile

over uneven ground, and elevated full twenty feet to their present position in the west wall, which girds the platform of the Temple. How was all this achieved? What a problem in the science of mechanical forces! What architect in our day could accomplish such a feat? Assuredly there must have been giants on the earth when such blocks were moved about. Look at the way in which these gigantic blocks are cut, squared, and polished, so truly, so smoothly, so exactly. And, what is perhaps even *more* amazing still, the fit is so exceedingly nice that the joint has to be searched for, and when discovered, would hardly admit the blade of a knife between the stones, so that one may be easily deceived into measuring two as one. But the largest stone yet lies in the neighbouring quarry, never having reached its destination. It is no less than sixty-nine feet long, and fourteen by seventeen. It would probably weigh 1100 tons, and contains

13,000 cubic feet. I can only exclaim with Dominie Samson, 'Prodigious, pro-di-gious!'

The spiral staircase which leads to the top of Jupiter's Temple can only be reached by crawling through a small dark aperture or hole, like that of a badger; no very agreeable undertaking for me, as I am always in dread of meeting with centipedes or scorpions in such places. However, 'nothing venture, nothing have,' so I prostrated myself on the earth and followed my guides, who struck a light. I was astonished at the excellent state of preservation in which these massive steps yet remain; and they are almost as clean and free from dust as the spiral staircase of the famous Campanile at Florence. The view from the summit well repaid us for the trouble of ascending; but I grew dizzy by watching Charley capering about, in the most perilous situations he could possibly find, as if meditating the last desperate step, and thus putting a tragical finale to our tour.

We next explored the vaulted passages beneath the Great Temple,—long ranges of vaults and corridors with round arches,—all, of course, on as vast a scale as the rest. Very dismal places they are, dark, cold, and encumbered by heaps of rubbish.<sup>1</sup> I was only too glad to make my exit, and occupy myself in searching about the ruins above for a relic to send you, dear Maria; but not a scrap of ivy, moss, or fern could I find, although I looked in every direction, nor anything in the shape of a flower, excepting one poor solitary white mallow, which I eagerly plucked, and placed between the leaves of a book for you.

Dr. Stewart thinks that these ruins, as seen by moonlight, exceed in grandeur and solemnity the far-famed moonlight view of the Colosseum at Rome; but the *latter* certainly appeared *to me* the more imposing

<sup>1</sup> For fuller and more detailed account of the Temples and city of Ba'albek, see Appendix.

of the two. It may be merely because my enthusiasm was just a shade deeper, when I wandered by moonlight through the magnificent ruins of dear old Rome, than it is at present. On our return to the little khan, we resolved on dismissing Seid Ahmed, the old Dreuse sheikh, and sending him and his horse back to Bhamdoon, as the animal was quite unfit for the long and toilsome journey before us, with his sore back, and stumbling almost at every step. I had been in constant dread of being thrown over his head ; and in my endeavours to prevent his falling, by keeping a tight rein, and suddenly checking him every now and then, had not a little irritated the temper of his master, who imagined that I was rather cruelly treating his poor, ill-favoured beast. Nature had been by no means lavish in the bestowment of her gifts and graces, either mental or corporeal, to the pair, so that there were but few regrets at parting.

After no very lengthened search, Charley fortunately succeeded in finding here, at Ba'albek, another horse ready for hire,—a much better one, to all appearance, and with a good-natured, active young Arab to accompany him. We therefore agreed to hire them both, provided, after a brief trial to-morrow morning previous to starting, the steed should answer our expectations.

As soon as we had discussed our evening's repast, we proposed resting on the divan of the little room for a few hours, until the advent of the moon, and that we should then revisit the old Temples of Baal, whilst the queen of night would be sailing majestically aloft, completing by her magic touches the weird-like scene.

I confess there was more of watchfulness than rest or sleep for *me*, during the small hours of the night. I was continually starting up, fearing lest the downy pinions of Morpheus should overtake me, and that I



should awake regretfully, only to find that the silver orb had been gloriously illuminating these splendid ruins immediately in front of our window, whilst my heavy eyelids were closed in leaden slumber, dull oblivion.

*Friday, September 11.*

After breakfast I tried my new horse, and found I had reason to be well pleased with the exchange I had made. Then I paid yet another, and this time a solitary visit, to the old heathen temples; but in endeavouring to retrace my steps and return to our little khan, I took a wrong turn somewhere, and got confused amongst rapid gushing streamlets, the debris of buildings, old broken-down walls, and the narrow, tortuous, rugged lanes of the village, where heaps of all sorts of rubbish impeded me at almost every step. I stumbled and floundered on, till fortunately some of my party discovered me and conducted me back to

our quarters, where we speedily made ready for our departure, and at about 11 A.M. we proceeded on our way.

We traversed the fine, fertile, and well-cultivated plain called the Büká'a, which is situated between the Lebanon and the mountain ridge of Anti-Lebanon.

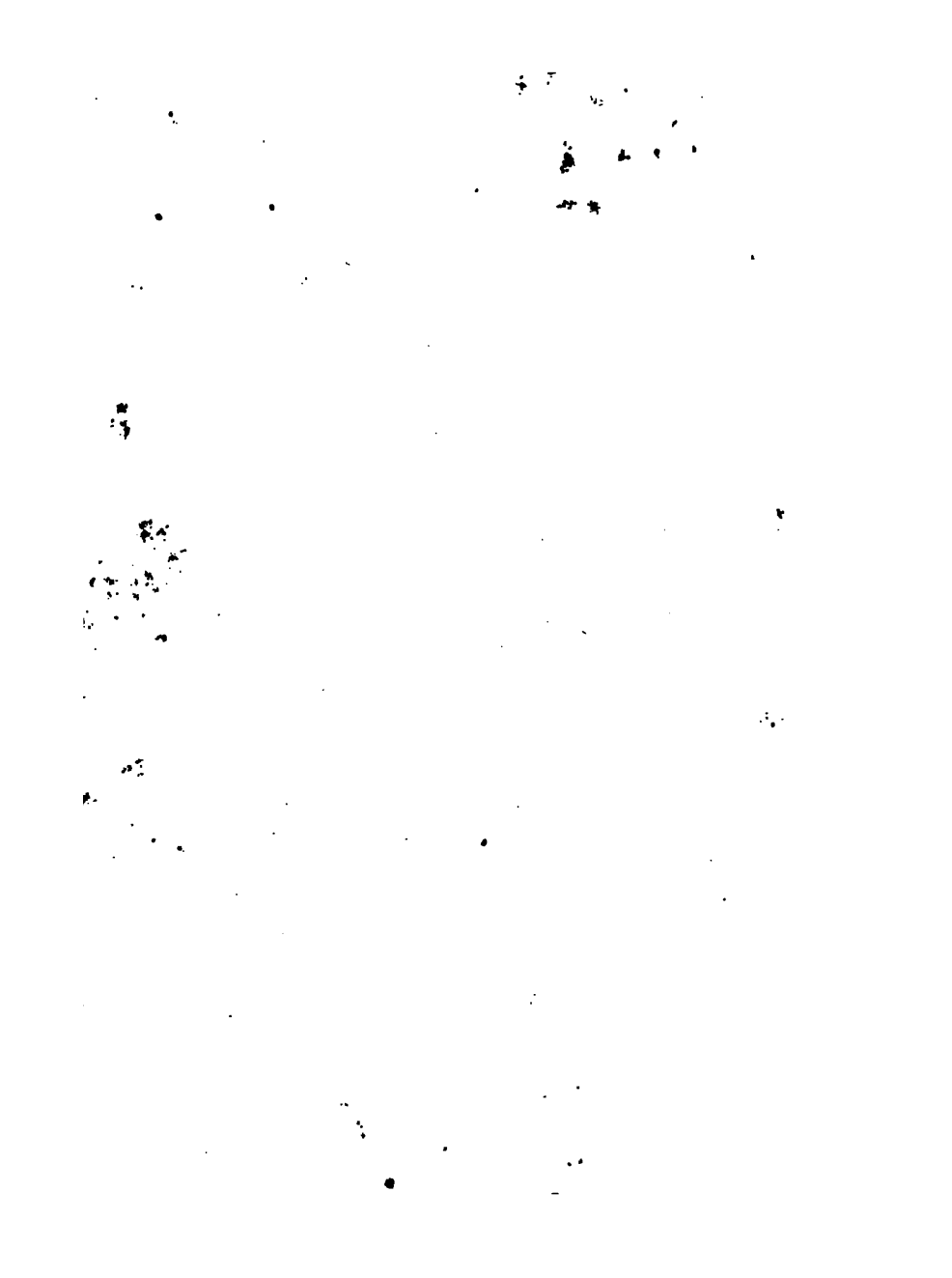
In its general character this great valley of the Büká'a is a vast and lofty mountain cleft, eight or nine miles wide, and the summits by which it is enclosed or shut in, as viewed from its plain, have from three to four thousand feet less of altitude than as seen from the Mediterranean and its shores. Its elevation in *parts* cannot be less than four thousand feet above the sea. The great plain itself, as seen through the openings of the hills, is superbly rich and beautiful, a precious gem, lying deep in its setting of mountains, and fringed with the brilliant pearly snows of Lebanon.

Still in *some parts* towards the north, the

character of the Būkâ'a undergoes a great and decided change for the worse. Across this vast plain, by the bye, it is said that Noah passed by three rapid steps. Nor need we marvel much at the prodigious length of his strides, after seeing his grave near Zahleh, which is upwards of one hundred and twenty-six feet long. I have visited and sketched this so-called grave. It is a kind of oblong mound, raised about three or four feet from the ground, whitewashed, and is now covered over with a piece of green cloth. Many Arabic inscriptions are suspended from the walls which enclose it, and which are roofed over. My hasty sketch will, however, convey to you a better idea of it than I can do merely through the medium of pen, ink, and paper.

After pursuing our way for an hour and a half, we observed a large solitary column standing in the western part of the plain, N.N.W. of Ba'albek, south of Deir-el-Ahmar.





We rode up to it, and found it of the Corinthian order. It is about five feet in diameter, nearly sixty feet high, and is elevated on a pedestal, or platform, of five steps. Besides the base and capital, it consists of fourteen or fifteen blocks of stone, each block about three feet thick. Although, on the north side, there is hewn a smooth tablet, which appears to have been intended for an inscription, no letters are now visible. If ever there were any imprinted on it, the relentless tooth of time, from which the whole column has suffered much, has entirely erased them. So that by whom it was erected, or for what purpose, remains a mystery,—and a problem, I think, not likely to be solved. By the natives it is called 'El-Maghazel,' the spindle. Possibly this may have been a monument erected in some relation to Ba'albek or its boundaries; or more probably to commemorate some important historical event, now unknown; but

as it has neither history nor story of its own to relate, and as here even tradition maintains a profound silence, all that can be said concerning it must be mere conjecture.

There it stands ! grand, isolated, crumbling away, proclaiming emphatically the vanity of human aspirations after fame and celebrity.

‘O ancient pile in lonely spot,  
Where are thy glories now ?  
Thou art by all but *Time* forgot,  
To which all things must bow.’

So says the poet. Profoundly, then, I’ll bow to *Time*, and ask, Whose was this stately monument ?

‘O *Time* declare !

Time stays not to reply, but quickly flies,  
Spreading his rapid pinions to the air.  
I marvelling advanced, nor far had gone,  
When o’er the lofty pile, with scowl malign,  
*Oblivion* proudly marched, from stone to stone.

“*Thou* perhaps canst tell,” I cried, “nor oh decline.”

“Whose ?” muttered he, in low and hurried tone ;  
“Whose once it was, I care not ; *now* ’tis *mine*.”

We continued our ride over the plain, till we came to the foot of the Lebanon, which we began to ascend. A toilsome journey was before us, yet this is not the *main* ridge, but a side ridge or spur, comparatively low.

The main summits of Lebanon are El-Kenîseh (just south of which passes the road from Beirût to Damascus), Sünnîn, and the peaks above the Cedars.

The first, El-Kenîseh, is marked by Petermann at 7245 feet. Sünnîn, according to Marshal Marmont, is about 8300 English feet. One summit above the Cedars, Fum-el-Mîzâb, was found by Dr. de Forest in 1853 to be 9135 feet. Another adjacent peak, Dahar-el-Küdhîb, was estimated by him to be at least 175 feet higher; in all, 9310 English feet. *This is the highest point of all Lebanon.* These summits thus rise about 6000 feet above the Bükâ'a and its water-shed, but the general elevation of the ridge above the valley is, of course, much less.



Anti-Lebanon, on the other hand, has its highest summit in the south, Jebel-esh-Sheikh, estimated at 9000 feet; this mountain, although *in a sense* broken off from Anti-Lebanon, yet belongs to the same range. Anti-Lebanon, with the exception of Esh-Sheikh, is *everywhere lower* than Lebanon, and seems to tower much less above the Great Valley. The mountain above Blûdân, the highest point of Anti-Lebanon proper, rises to the height of 6800 feet. The highest point of the *road* between the Cedars and Ba'albek is about 7500 English feet, which we shall probably reach to-morrow.

The mountains over which we travelled to-day were for the most part nearly covered with dwarf prickly oaks, bearing a fine and beautifully formed acorn, but having a leaf closely resembling that of our holly, only smaller. We observed many hawthorn and other bushes around us, and under a little

thicket of these I (not without difficulty) prevailed on our party to halt, in order that I might snatch a few moments' repose during the noontide heat, I felt so dreadfully exhausted.

Whilst enjoying this delightful shade, some kind Arab girls approached, and offered us jars of deliciously cool water to drink from, which, as you will readily imagine, we most gladly and gratefully accepted.

Fain would we have tarried longer in this pleasant mountain retreat, but 'Forward' was the word of command for to-day; so we again mounted our steeds, albeit rather reluctantly for *once*, and journeyed on over rugged mountains, where we encountered herds of black goats and flocks of sheep,—beautiful large Syrian sheep, with picturesque horns, and enormous heavy tails; the latter appendage, *it is said*, weighing sometimes as much as fifty pounds, though I cannot vouch for the truth of the assertion, and composed of a yellow, marrow-like fat, which, when

melted, is much used by the natives for cooking, in the place of butter, lard, or oil. It is frequently flavoured by the admixture of Sessame seeds, which impart a greenish hue to the condiment, and it then seems to be peculiarly grateful to the palate of an *Arab*, under whatever form of the culinary art it may be applied. To me, however, most distasteful, not to say disgusting, is every dish, nay, even the odour of every dish, into which the slightest portion enters.

Sometimes our path led us through vales or clefts, and beside gushing streamlets, where our eyes were refreshed by green and verdant spots. Surely, I thought, nothing can possibly surpass this. Here we have wild mountain scenery to perfection, and all on the most magnificent scale imaginable. I was in truth absolutely enchanted by the grandeur and variety of the views around me, where each succeeding turn brought a fresh combination of beauties,

almost as sudden, as unexpected, and as diversified as those produced by the movements of the kaleidoscope.

Eagles and vultures swept through the air ; lizards were darting about, under and over, around and amongst the stones, or stood gazing upwards, with ardent, fiery eyes, towards the sun. They are exceedingly numerous and in great variety here ; perfectly harmless, too, I am told. Some have bodies nearly as large as a good-sized frog in England, and short thick tails, rough toad-like skins of dark grey, brown, or almost black. Others are long, slender, sleek, and snake-like, with gay citron-coloured skins, and a tiny stripe of brilliant orange round the body. Then, again, we meet with some quite small, much more diminutive than the beautiful little green lizard of Italy, all speckled and spotted with silver grey, white, and black, but not so prettily formed as those of *cara Italia*.

These curious, inquisitive - looking little creatures used to amuse me at Jerusalem, by continually running up and down the canvas sides of my tent, in the early sunny mornings, and peeping down upon me whilst in my bed. I used to *half* fear sometimes lest they should chance to make a *faux pas* and come tumbling down, but they never so demeaned themselves.

One lizard, *they say*, there is of a rather suspicious character. If not exactly venomous, it has at least the reputation of either infecting by its noxious breath, or of leaving a poisonous trail over everything it touches. It is very small, of a whitish hue, semi-transparent, creeping occasionally into the houses and over the food,—a most loathsome intruder under every circumstance. Whether this reptile belongs merely to the mythological world or not, I cannot say, but it is quite certain that in Italy lizards are not generally held in good repute amongst mothers. Well-educated and enlightened

matrons at Naples, both English and Italian, have assured me as a positive fact, that during an infant's slumbers they not unfrequently crawl stealthily to its mouth, from which they extract the milk it has taken.

We pursued our course till evening, over mountains of a similar character to those we had traversed in the earlier part of the day, still thickly studded with prickly oak and many other shrubs.

During our progress, I was held in constant admiration by the sagacity of our sure-footed animals, more especially the mules, which seemed to know their way even better than their masters,—preceding them with the luggage at a considerable distance, and invariably taking the right path ; from time to time stopping, and looking back till the more tardy muleteers came in sight, then trotting on again, and *directing* the rest of the party.

At sunset we reached a charming spot, a kind of knoll surrounded by shallow ravines,

where some Arabs encamp to pass the summer months. We found them exceedingly friendly and obliging. They cooked us very nice potatoes and fresh eggs, fetched us new milk, and kindled us an immense fire, spreading a large piece of matting before it, on which we placed our bedding, quilts, blankets, etc. We were inclined to do ample justice to the excellent provisions they had so kindly brought us; and whilst we were eating our supper, the numerous members of the Arab family, seating themselves on the edge of our mat, surrounded and gazed at us.

I longed to sketch many of the groups, there were such capital figures for the pencil of an artist amongst them. Their black hair, piercing eyes, and dark complexions, varying from rich olive to nearly black, with all the intermediate shades of brown, rendered still more striking and effective by the flickering, fitful light of our blazing

fire,—costume, attitude, and all, so exactly adapted for painting. Indeed, the dress of these wandering Arabs always appears to me as if *invented* and *worn merely* with an eye to the picturesque. One would be almost inclined to imagine that *use* and *comfort* were totally disregarded by them.

The head of the family, or tribe, appeared a most patriarchal and venerable personage, with his long white beard and gracefully-flowing robes. He wore a high conical cap or kind of turban, formed of some dark blue material, and in shape resembling a very tall bee-hive.

His wife also had a singular and remarkably handsome head-gear, — a bowl-shaped cap of embossed silver, with a row of small coins or money pendant across the front. It was finely and beautifully worked, but far too cumbrous and heavy, I should fancy, to be agreeable to the wearer. Like most Orientals she wore a profusion of ornaments,



massive silver bracelets, charms, amulets, and a multiplicity of large silver coins, current money of the country, suspended by chains over her neck and chest.

We slept here on our mats in the open air, fanned by the freshest and most invigorating of mountain breezes; and I passed a far better night than I had done for a long time before, remaining, strange to relate, *un-bitten for once*, and undisturbed by my usual tormentors. Neither flea, bug, sand-fly, mosquito, nor any other vexatious intruder molested me. It *may be* that my inveterate enemies were duly observing their *Ramadan*; at any rate, it is a fact that on this particular night, they, one and all, most magnanimously refrained from their accustomed repast.

*Saturday, September 12.*

Awoke much refreshed, and happily in time to watch the sun, rising in all his

splendour over some of the very loftiest peaks of Lebanon.

What a glorious sight! Awaiting his advent, these goodly mountains seem like monarchs in their richest robes of state, so deep, so gorgeous is the purple in which they are clothed; whilst on each majestic head in turn is cast a dazzling crown of golden beams. Doubtless it is the diadem of snow they still retain which glistens with such unwonted brilliancy beneath the rays of the morning sun.

As the orb of day advances, a flood of light is poured over the whole scene. The rosy hues of morn vanish off, purple and gold melt away, and become transfused into one even and harmonious tone; just as the early dreams, and hopes, and anticipations of youth fade and sober down into the gravity of truth, and, not unfrequently, I fear, the dullness of reality, as we pursue our journey through life.

But there is no time for meditation just now, we must press on ; and in sober truth, I am beginning to feel, as well I might, the keen demands of appetite ; so looking round, I spy, not far off upon the ground, a something steaming in the pot,—in that capacious pot of the Arabs, which is nevertheless by no means too vast for our requirements ; that nice, open, broad, bowl-shaped pot ; that fine, frank fellow, which has become such an interesting object to me of late. Ah ! how attractive, too, that something within it looks ; that pure white fluid, white as the driven snow ; and how sweet its odour in this clear, fresh, mountain air, and in the early morning, before we have broken our fast !

You may be very sure the contents of this said pot did not remain long without our giving the most undoubted evidence of our approval of its *taste* also ; and meanwhile we receive the gratifying intelligence, that

three hours' ride would bring us to the Cedars. New milk, fresh eggs, and thin Arabic bread are now quickly despatched ; mules, muleteers, and baggage are made ready with all the speed we could incite, if not all we could desire, for this very superior occasion, and we set off, I need scarcely say, in excellent spirits.

But oh ! what a ride we had ! Could we have foreseen what was before us, I think we should hardly have bestowed so many smiles on it. 'How *wisely* Heaven from all creatures hides the Book of Fate !' Regular road, pathway, or even goat-track there is none that I could discern ; and a route more rugged, rocky, precipitous, steep, slippery, or more circuitous, there surely could not be found in this sublunary world.

We made our way slowly and with difficulty, as we best could, sometimes scaling barren, rocky, and almost perpendicular mountains,—

‘Where,  
Nor tree, nor shrub, nor plant, nor flower,  
Nor aught of vegetative power,  
The weary eye may ken.’

Then again descending a precipice equally steep, now winding along the edge of a yawning chasm, now through a profound gorge, now struggling amongst huge boulders, from which it appears more than doubtful whether we shall ever become extricated without loss of life, or leaving a limb as a legacy to the jackals, to say the least of it; now our way leads us down the wildest and roughest of water-courses,

‘Where all is rocks, at random thrown.’

I often felt utterly at a loss to conceive how such a feat as *progression* could here be accomplished, and was fain to turn to my horse as the more sapient animal of the two, trusting to him alone to solve the difficulty for me by a practical demonstration.

In my clever little Syrian quadruped I

place the most implicit confidence,—‘What horse has done, horse can do.’ So, like a certain renowned Scotchman in days of yore, I cry, ‘Go to it, Sky-scraper;’ and he does it, without wincing a bit, rarely stumbling, never falling. Yes, *he* manages equally well the ascent or descent of a precipice, where loose, treacherous stones slip and slide away beneath the feet at almost every step, where the iron rings and clatters over large smooth slabs, where the hoofs are suddenly plunged into half-concealed hollows, or sink into the softest and most deceptive beds of sand.

Ah! how well I can now appreciate those promises in Scripture which ensure from sliding and falling; for to slide and to fall *here* is in a thousand places certain destruction. Terrible indeed are those threatenings against the workers of iniquity: ‘They shall be set in slippery places: slippery ways in the darkness.’

Several times during our journey this morning, our attention has been attracted by large horizontal stripes of dazzling white, on some of the loftiest of the mountains towering before us, and the ascent of which we have yet to make. I readily, and, as it proved, rightly, conjectured the nature of so unexpected an appearance; but the curiosity of my young friend C. B—— was excited, and he urged on his steed as rapidly as circumstances would permit, in order that he might satisfy himself by a closer inspection. When I reached the spot a little later, to my great amusement I found him dismounted beside a large ridge of snow, long sword in hand, and, boy-like, hacking and hewing away with all his might at the hard encrustment, which, glistening like diamonds in the rays of the sun, had arrested our notice even from such a distance. The muleteers also were performing their part in the work most energetically, and

by dint of their united efforts, several fine unsullied pieces were at length detached, with which (after taking a *sorbetto di Libano, molto delizioso*) we loaded our saddlebags, and I promised myself the pleasure of making a refreshing cup of tea from it on our arrival at the Cedars. We then enjoyed a game at snowballs; and lastly, beside this attractive wreath of snow, I gathered some pretty little yellow flowers, which I design for your album of dried specimens. The rays of the sun at noonday melting a portion of the snow-ridge, causes a little streak of verdure to run down below, and on this favoured spot I found these blooms. Both plant and flower grow rather short, and near to the ground, and both bear a strong resemblance to that earliest of our spring visitants, which adorns our banks and hedgerows in England almost before the primrose or violet has ventured to peep forth.



We set off again on our toilsome ascent, and continued wending our way upon and amongst rocky, and, for the most part, naked, barren mountains, until I began to despair of ever reaching our destination. We were now about 7500 English feet above the sea.

Occasionally, it is true, though but rarely, our jaded eyes were relieved by a tiny patch of a dark greenish hue, and our parched lips were refreshed, in some slight measure, by a few acid berries somewhat similar to the cranberry, and said to be good for quenching thirst, which our muleteers plucked for us from a low prickly bush, creeping closely over the ground.

At length we found ourselves on the summit of a lofty ridge, immediately overhanging the vast and magnificent recess in which the Cedars stand, and I confess a feeling of disappointment stole over me as I thus contemplated, for the first time,

this celebrated and sacred grove. Looking down upon them from this elevated point of view and from this distance, they by no means came up to the picture my imagination had formed of the remains of the ancient forest of Lebanon,—those goodly Cedars of Lebanon of which Solomon spake nearly three thousand years ago; those favourite emblems amongst the prophets of all that was grand, noble, and majestic. 'Behold, the Assyrian was a Cedar in Lebanon, with fair branches, and with a shadowing shroud, and of an high stature; and his top was among the thick boughs. The waters made him great, the *deep* set *him* up on high, with *her* rivers running round about his plants, and sent out her *little* rivers unto *all* the *trees of the field*. Therefore *his* height was exalted *above* all the trees of the field, and his boughs were multiplied, and his branches became long, because of the multitude of waters, when he shot forth.

All the fowls of heaven made their nests in his boughs, and under his branches did all the beasts of the field bring forth their young, and under his shadow dwelt all great nations. Thus was he fair in his greatness, in the length of his branches: for his root was by *great* waters. The cedars in the garden of God could not hide him: the fir-trees were not like his boughs, and the chestnut-trees were not like his branches; *nor any tree in the garden of God was like unto him in his beauty.* I have made him fair by the multitude of his branches; so that all the trees of Eden, that were in the garden of God, envied him. And all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon,' etc.

From our exalted position on this mountain ridge might be clearly discerned the dark lines which is formed by the deep and precipitous chasm of the Kadisha, the holy river of Lebanon, which without ex-

ception is the very grandest of all the gorges of Lebanon. After gazing awhile on this fascinating scene, we descended the steep side of the hill towards the Cedars, cantered across the recess or ravine, and came up to the venerable group, between 3 and 4 P.M.

As we drew near, all feelings akin to disappointment vanished, and we became transfixed with admiration and astonishment at the dimensions of these noble trees. They are situated on four contiguous rocky knolls, in the midst of an immense amphitheatre, — a grand temple of nature, 6400 English feet above the sea, encircled by the very loftiest ridges of Lebanon, which tower above it some 3000 English feet. This is the region of perpetual snow, though of course the covering is only partial. These ancient patriarchs, these monarchs of the vegetable kingdom, in their regal pride stand completely aloof, utterly alone, with not a tree

besides, and scarcely another green thing in sight, 'high and lifted up' as of old.

It was now my delightful task to select a favourable spot for our bivouac beneath these shades of solemn grandeur. There was no difficulty in finding an abundance of clear and suitable places, as although the trees, of various ages and sizes, altogether form quite a thick forest, there is no underbush, and the earth being profusely strewn with the fine, dry, hair-like foliage, which has fallen during the long summer months, we were already furnished with a soft and agreeable carpet.

After some little hesitation, I fixed on a pleasant circular space, completely, and very regularly, surrounded by the most magnificent trees, which seemed to rear their hoary heads to the blue arch of heaven, forming a kind of round tower, with a lofty, open, Pantheon-like dome.

The burden of snow we had carried so far

in our saddle-bags was next produced, and by the aid of my little spirit-lamp (the invaluable gift of my good friend Dr. P—— of Leghorn), I speedily prepared a cup of that beverage 'which cheers but not inebriates,' and which proved the best possible remedy for the headache and fatigue occasioned by our toilsome journey. Our muleteers soon collected sufficient dry branches, and cones which had fallen from the cedars, to kindle as well as to supply us during the night with a splendid and fragrant fire.

I observed Mustapha, as he established himself in his dormitory, placing with the utmost *sang froid* a bare stone under his head. Well, I thought, if he makes a hard pillow he must sleep on it, I suppose; and sleep on it he certainly does, far more soundly and sweetly than I can do on one of the softest down. So much for habit,—second nature. I know not how nearly his dreams may have approached in sublimity

to those of the patriarch of old 'who lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.'

For myself, I made my nocturnal arrangements by putting my saddle, saddle-bags, etc., by way of pillow, against the huge trunk of one of these giants of the forest, spread my quilts, blankets, etc., and being of a most sanguine temperament, really hoped to succeed in composing my slumbers. Alas! how little did I dream that, instead of sinking into the lap of 'nature's soft nurse,' I should have to encounter *hosts* of my dusky enemies.

Yes, even *here*, myriads of these sanguinary and ferocious wretches were lying in ambush on the bare earth, and ready, the very moment I closed my eyelids, to pierce me with ten thousand darts. No fleeting

dream, no mere vision of the night was this, but, alas! one of the sad experiences of Oriental life. Sleep, repose, and rest fled far from woeful me, to pay their ready visits, like the world, where fortune smiled; whilst I fought for dear life's blood most valiantly, till break of day, when my deplorable condition may perhaps be better imagined than described, even to you, oh my sister Maria!

*Sunday, September 13.*

Having passed a bad night, felt cold, comfortless, and torpid, for a few brief moments, on raising myself from my recumbent position on the earth (loss of blood naturally enough causing exhaustion of the system); much cheered and revived, nevertheless, by the fine bracing air of these high regions, and by a nice breakfast of new milk, new honey in the comb, and stewed chicken.

We wish to spend a quiet, contemplative Sabbath-day under the shade of these mighty



trees of God, these goodly Cedars, these Cedars of Lebanon which He hath planted.

Our man Ibrahim will not, it seems, be able to render us much assistance, as he says he has still a good deal of the fever about him which is so common in this country. I had several times noticed how inactive and languid he appeared, and not being aware that he was really ill, had felt inclined to censure him for what I erroneously imagined to be indolence.

These intermittent Syrian fevers often come on quite suddenly, and very frequently linger in the system for years. There is great loss of appetite, loss of strength and energy, both mental and corporeal; sometimes the flesh wastes away, till the unfortunate patient looks but a mere shadow of his former self, and appears like a person in the last stage of consumption.

I recollect a young friend of mine once so abruptly leaving the table, at which a

little drawing party was assembled, that I fancied she must have felt displeased at some remark; but on inquiry learnt that she had been seized with fever, and had at once retired to bed. She was then a remarkably fine, blooming girl, but soon became pale, emaciated, listless, and nervous. The doctors ordered, as usual, an abundance of quinine, good living, plenty of wine, and fresh air, but all in vain. She then, much against my wish, tried the cold water system, and without deriving any real benefit from it, of course. After months of suffering, change of climate alone succeeded in restoring her to her former excellent state of health.

What appears to me so strange in these intermittent fevers, is the regular intervals at which they come and go; the periods of their recurrence are fixed, the intervening periods are of longer or shorter duration in different stages of the complaint, or in

different individuals, as the case may be; hourly, daily, weekly, or fortnightly the attack may return, but the patient generally knows exactly when to expect the unwelcome visitor.

Great numbers of Arabs have been to see us to-day, both men and women. The latter wore splendid jackets, short, and open in front, made of fine blue cloth richly embroidered with gold and silver.

On my inquiring where they bought them, they replied, at Damascus and Beirût; so that Syria still maintains her reputation for this beautiful work, as of old, when the rich supply of Tyre was spoken of in Scripture: 'Syria was thy merchant, by reason of the multitude of the wares of thy making: they occupied in thy fairs with emeralds, purple, and *broidered work*, and fine linen, and coral, and agate.' 'These were thy merchants in all sorts of things, in *blue clothes*, and *broidered work*, and in chests of rich apparel,

bound with cords, and made of cedar, among thy merchandise.'

We have also had a visit from the Maronite priest, who tells me there is a little chapel here amongst the Cedars, and that he wishes me to return with him to see it. I believe it has been erected within the last thirty years. It certainly has no pretension whatever to beauty ; on the contrary, I consider it rather an unsightly object, and I fear many a goodly branch must have been ruthlessly lopped away from the sacred trees in order to form its roof. To my surprise on entering, I found it nearly filled with wood, for lighting fires I imagine, so that at present there cannot be any religious services held in it. Generally speaking, during the summer months, several persons in connection with the chapel reside here, and a part of their object, at least, seems to be to wait on travellers to supply their wants, and thus to gain a claim for bakhshish.

In former times the Maronites were accustomed to celebrate in this sacred grove the festival of the Transfiguration, when the patriarch himself officiated, and said mass before a rude altar of stones; and in past centuries, too, the patriarch of the Maronites imposed various ecclesiastical penalties, and even excommunication, on any Christian who should cut or injure the sacred trees. There is even a story related, that when some Moslems who were pasturing in the vicinity were so hardened and impious as to cut some of the trees, they were punished on the spot by the loss of their flocks.

To a certain extent, *very limited* I fear, this law, as well as the ceremonies I have already mentioned, are continued at the present day. And doubtless the popular mind has thus been considerably influenced.

The Feast of the Cedars still occurs regularly, I believe, every year, at the commencement of August, when the natives, both lay

and clerical, assemble in hundreds to spend a night in prayer and revelry around these venerable trees.

At this period, their fine, widely extending boughs and massy branches are unsparingly cut off, large blocks are hacked and hewn away from the aged trunks, to be used as firewood, and kindled, I grieve to say, beside the huge bodies and upon the exposed roots of some of the most ancient patriarchs of the forest. The words of the prophet involuntarily recur to one's mind: 'I will prepare destroyers against thee, every one with his weapons, and they shall cut down thy *choice Cedars*, and cast them into the fire.' 'And he shall cut down the thickest of the forest with iron.' 'Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down.'

The Maronites firmly believe that the seven *most ancient* trees yet standing are the remains of the identical forest which furnished Solomon with timber for the temple, full three thousand years ago.

They can be proved to be of very great antiquity, as, more than three hundred years since, Bellonius visited, counted, and wrote a description of them. The number of the very ancient trees was then twenty-eight, so that the patriarchs—that is to say, the patriarchs of a hundred generations—are considerably reduced since the year 1550. Meantime, however, many younger and yet most noble trees have sprung up to supply their places.

In 1738, one tree was blown down, or rather, may we not say, shivered by the voice of God. 'For the voice of Jehovah shivers ~~even~~ the Cedars of Lebanon.' 'The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. The voice of the Lord breaketh the Cedars; yea, the Lord breaketh the Cedars of Lebanon. He maketh them also to skip like a calf.'

As to the exact number of Cedars, both young and old, large and small, which com-

pose the sacred group at the present day, it really seems impossible to give you any correct information. Indeed it is a matter of popular belief, that they cannot be counted with any degree of certainty, *i.e.* that no two persons would ever make out the same number. Some say that there are not more than five hundred trees altogether, of which about a dozen *now* may be ranked as reaching back in age to the time of Solomon. Others make the number of the *very ancient trees* less,—only seven, as I have before stated. Who shall decide the puzzling question? When so many wiser heads than mine have been perplexed, surely *I* must not presume to do so, nor shall I make any attempt to count them myself; the task would be rather too fatiguing, considering that the platform on which the grove stands is nearly half a mile in circumference. Probably no two persons would ever fully agree, in respect to the old ones, or those



which may be considered the *most venerable* of the patriarchs, some reckoning more, some less; nor would they agree better in regard to the number which make up the whole group. The fact also that many of the trees have two or more stems, and consequently may be counted as one, two, or even three trees, may make a difference in the reckoning. Hence arises the extreme difficulty of exact enumeration.

The great discrepancies, too, in the accounts of different travellers, since the year 1550 (and perhaps not less than seventy have already written descriptions of them), may be attributed to the continual change which is taking place within the precincts of the holy forest, old trees disappearing, young ones springing up.

Unquestionably, during the last three centuries, the number of the earlier trees has diminished by nearly or quite one-half, whilst the younger growth has in great

part, if not wholly, sprung up during that interval.

All the travellers of the sixteenth century speak only of the *old trees*; they nowhere mention any young ones. Rauwolf, a botanist himself, seems to say expressly that he sought for young trees, without being able to find any.

I am rather disposed myself to concur in the language of Burckhardt, who says: 'Of the oldest and best-looking trees, I counted eleven or twelve,—twenty-five *very large ones*, about fifty of middling size, and more than three hundred smaller and young ones. They grow at any rate within a compass of less than forty rods in diameter, or in other words, the space which is covered by them does not exceed half-a-dozen acres. Some of the oldest trees are of a prodigious bulk. One of the largest has been measured, and found to be twelve yards six inches in girth, yet sound, and

thirty-seven yards in the spread of its boughs. At about five or six yards from the ground it is divided into five limbs, each of which is equal to a great tree. Indeed, many of the most aged have several trunks, and thus spread themselves very widely around; yet these ancients still bear a plentiful crop of cones.

‘The righteous shall grow like a Cedar in Lebanon, they shall bring forth fruit in old age, they shall be fat and flourishing.’  
‘The trees of the Lord are full of sap, the Cedars of Lebanon which He hath planted.’

Many of the other trees are cone-like in form, and do not throw out their boughs laterally to any great extent.

Some few trees stand alone on the outskirts of the forest; and there is one especially, on the south, which greatly excites my admiration; it is so tall, so large and massy, and so beautifully formed, that I

quite promise myself the pleasure of sketching it before I quit the sacred grove.

As these mighty trees of God rear their heads to an enormous height, so they are the first objects to attract the fury of the lightning. This may account, in some measure, for many of the older trees being in so shattered, broken, and disfigured a condition as they now appear. Unfortunately, too, the fashion is coming into vogue to have articles made of this wood for sale to travellers. It is also burned as fuel by the few people who pass the summer here; and added to all these causes of destruction (which, though but gradual in their operation, are nevertheless sure), is the circumstance that travellers in former ages, to say nothing of the present time, have been shameless enough to cause large spots or tablets to be hewn smooth, on the trunks of some of the noblest trees, in order to inscribe their names. One of the earliest to

be seen is that of a Frenchman, dated 1791. Other names there are, I am almost ashamed to say, well known in history and in literature; and there are also many figuring away here, as perpetrators of a barbarous and almost sacrilegious act, which no one ever has or probably ever will hear of elsewhere. How powerful must be the craving after notoriety in that mind which can prefer thus to excite the sneers and just indignation of posterity, rather than to remain unknown.

These Cedars are the trees of God which He hath planted: not merely interesting and venerable are they, but *sacred*. They seem, indeed, *ever* to have been held in such high estimation as to have been regarded as objects of almost religious reverence. Inseparably, too, has Holy Writ linked them with the Temple of God at Jerusalem. 'Why have ye not built me an house of Cedar?' 'Spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I com-

manded to feed my people Israel, saying, 'Why build ye not me an house of Cedar?' 'And David said to Nathan the prophet, Lo, I dwell in an house of *Cedars*, but the ark of the covenant of the Lord remaineth under curtains.' 'The Zidonians and they of Tyre brought much Cedar-wood to David,' 'Cedar-trees in abundance.' Solomon said: 'As Thou didst deal with David my father, and didst send him *Cedars* to build him an house to dwell therein, even so deal with me.' 'Now therefore command thou that they hew me Cedar-trees out of Lebanon.' 'And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, I will do all thy desire concerning timber of Cedar. My servants shall bring them down from Lebanon unto the sea; and I will convey them by sea in floats unto the place that thou shalt appoint me.' 'So Hiram gave Solomon Cedar-trees and fir-trees, according to all his desire.' 'And meat, and drink, and oil was given to them

of Zidon and to them of Tyre, to bring Cedar - trees from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa, according to the grant that they had of Cyrus, king of Persia.' 'And Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand measures of wheat for food to his household, and twenty measures of pure oil: thus gave Solomon to Hiram year by year.' 'And King Solomon raised a levy out of all Israel; and the levy was thirty thousand men. And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month by courses; a month they were in Lebanon, and two months at home: and Adoniram was over the levy. And Solomon had threescore and ten thousand that bare burdens, and fourscore thousand hewers in the mountains.' 'So he built the house and finished it; and covered the house with beams and boards of *Cedar*, both the floor and the walls with boards of *Cedar*, and the walls of the ceiling; even for the oracle, even for the *most holy place*, it was

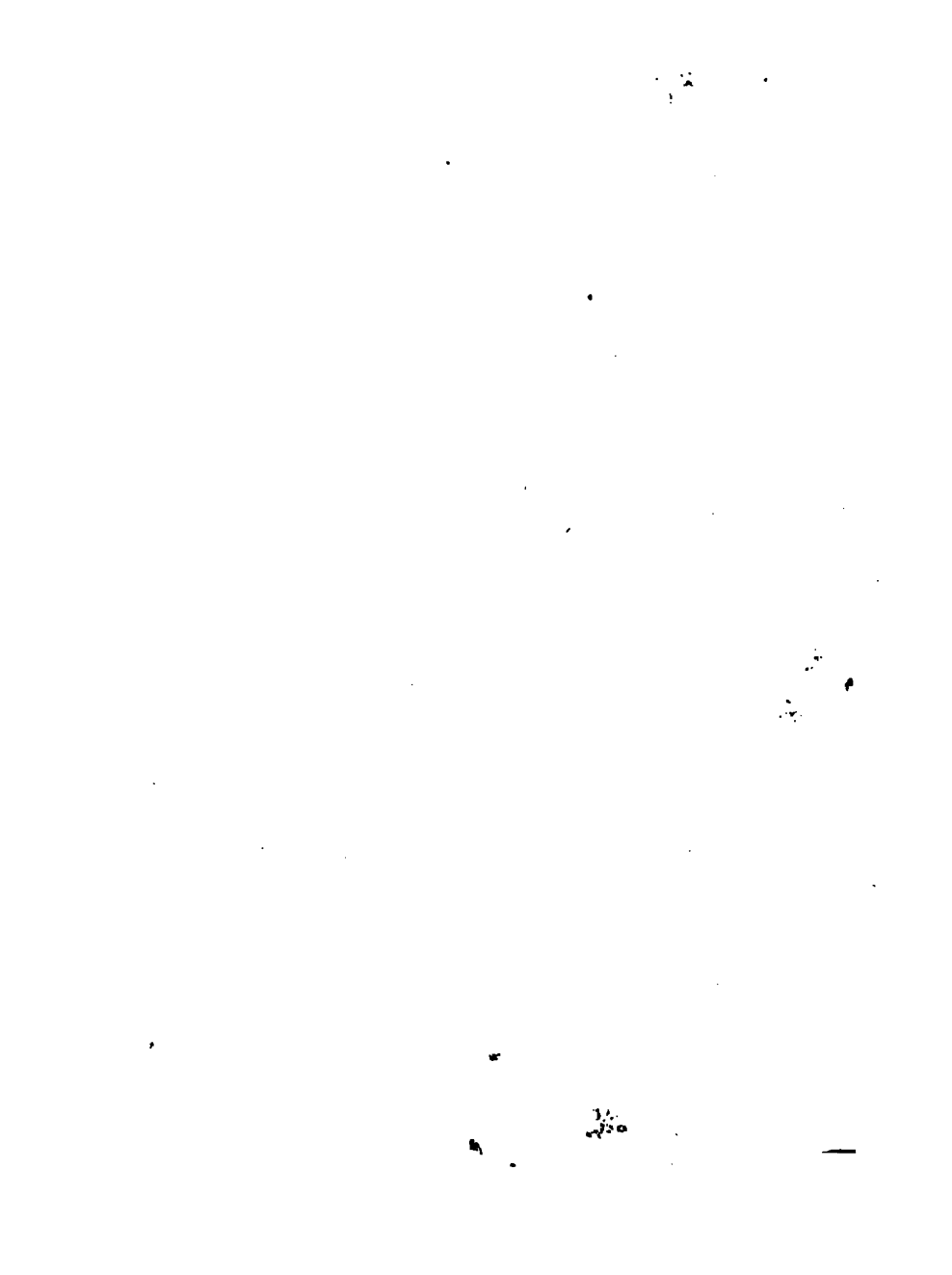
used.' 'And the *Cedar* of the house within was carved with knops and open flowers; *all was Cedar*, there was no stone seen; and it so covered the altar which was of *Cedar*. In the house of the forest of Lebanon, too, there were rows of *Cedar* pillars, with *Cedar* beams upon the pillars, that magnificent house in which all the vessels were of pure gold, because silver was nothing accounted of in those days.'

*Cedars* were also used for the masts of ships: 'They have taken Cedars from Lebanon to make masts for thee.' And for chests: 'And in chests for rich apparel, bound with cords and made of *Cedar*.' Doubtless these chests were intended for the trousseau of the bride, similar to those which are used for that purpose at the present day, and which are taken with her to her husband's house on the evening of her marriage. This ceremony I had the pleasure of recently witnessing myself, on the occasion of a



wealthy Arab's wedding to which I was invited at Bhamdoon. The chest I saw then, containing the paraphernalia of the bride, was large and handsome; but I am not sure whether it was made of Cedar or not. Nor can I speak with certainty as to the splendour of its contents. Judging, however, from the richness of the apparel worn by the bride, they must have been of a very costly description.

Her wedding-dress was of white silk, striped with satin, and most beautifully embroidered with silver and pink rosebuds. On her neck was a finely-wrought gold necklace, with its tasteful pendants. Of course she wore massive bracelets,—perhaps not unlike those two bracelets of ten shekels' weight of gold, which were sent to Rebekah, and placed on her hands by Abraham's old servant when he met her at the well,—ear-rings, and a variety of ornaments customary amongst Eastern women. On her head the red fez,





## THE LITTLE SILE

BY WILLIAM WATSON

THE LITTLE SILE, a people of the hills, is a very different thing from the Silas, a name which has been applied to the little people of the hills, when the hills are sufficiently luxuriant to support them. The race and of course the language of the little people of the hills were very different from those of the country, and the little people of the hills were very different from the little people of the hills.

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I have heard of the little people of the hills, and I have heard of the little people of the hills, and I have heard of the little people of the hills, and I have heard of the little people of the hills, and I have heard of the little people of the hills.



with its ample tassel of purple silk. Her hair was arranged in twelve long plaits, reaching nearly to her waist. I believe it is not unusual to lengthen these braids by the addition of a little silk, when the hair does not happen to be sufficiently luxuriant to please them. To the end of each of these plaits several bright gold coins were suspended—current money of the country, quite a little fortune for the bride.

*Monday, September 14.*

Sketching two of the largest and most magnificent trees I could find. They stand on a slope, just below the little chapel ; but unfortunately have been suffering from such a wretched headache all day, that I could by no means please myself in my work. Felt the air quite chilly and cold.

I have heard of some one having attempted to ascertain the age of one of the most venerable trees by counting the growths, or

annual concentric circles, for a few inches into the trunk, and from such data carrying back its birth 3500 years. It seems, according to this rate of measure, that it must have been growing ever since the Flood. It is also affirmed by some, that the girth of the largest tree exceeds forty-one feet, and that the height of the tallest is not less than one hundred feet.

To-day we have again had a great number of Arabs to visit us. One of the women especially attracted my attention, by the splendour of her attire, and by the profusion and richness of the ornaments she wore, all so massive, curious, and antique.

I find we are here at least two days' journey from Beirût, six or eight hours north of Jebel Sunnin, and hardly three hours from Eden or Ehden, which is very pleasantly situated on the north-western border of a deep gulf, running south-west to that of the Kadisha. The elevation of

Ehden above the sea is 4750 English feet. There is an abundance of water flowing from a fountain only ten minutes east of the village ; and as it lies on a slope facing the south, it produces a variety of excellent fruits, —figs, apricots, walnuts, grapes, etc., so that it appears the trees of Eden are still ‘the choice and best of Lebanon.’

Our man Ibrahim was despatched to endeavour to get us a little wine from this village to-day, but he returned without it, as he said he found it all had so strong a taste of vinegar, that he did not consider it worth while even to bring it for us to taste.

*Tuesday, September 15.*

We left the Cedars long before sunrise, indeed long before it was light. It was very cold, and we had to start without any breakfast. Not a drop of water was left in our water-jar to enable us even to perform our morning ablutions.



I must confess I felt far from comfortable, especially as my sleep had been greatly disturbed in the night by our fire, which seemed to do nothing but annoy us,—either smoking to such a degree that my eyes were quite blinded and sore, or darting out innumerable sparks upon us. Several times I discovered that our bedding was on fire, and was obliged to give an alarm. Then there was a general rise to extinguish the flames. I felt a little vexed at the carelessness of Ibrahim in placing his bed too near the fire, the consequence of which was that an enormous hole was burnt in a nice handsome quilt or coverlet, that I had hired from some one in the neighbourhood expressly for him, as he had been suffering so much from fever, and of course I had to pay for the damage.

Even the animals appeared to have been somewhat dissatisfied with their night's accommodation; at any rate they were disposed

to be unusually perverse and refractory during the operation of loading and saddling.

All petty discomforts and annoyances, however, speedily vanished as we pursued our course, and again beheld the glorious sunrise amongst the mountains of Lebanon.

‘Lo! yonder comes the powerful King of day,  
Rejoicing in the East. The lessening cloud,  
The kindling azure, and the mountain brow  
Illumin’d with fluid gold, his near approach  
Betoken glad.’

No words of mine can convey to your mind any adequate idea of the magnificence of the scenery through which we passed this morning.

After crossing the valley in which the forest of Cedars stands, we soon began to ascend one of the loftiest mountains, by a circuitous mule-path, far more steep, rough, and narrow than it would be in the power of your imagination to depict it—hardly fit, indeed, for the foot of a goat to travel on.

Whilst toiling up this acclivity, slowly, and with the utmost difficulty, making our way over loose stones and slippery rocks, I had a hairbreadth escape of my life. One of the mules which carried our luggage was only a few paces before me, and just at one of the very narrowest, steepest, and most perilous points of our course, where the ledge of rock we had to traverse seemed scarcely broader than my hand, and a fearful chasm yawned beneath, he began to frolic, caper, and kick at my horse in the most frightful manner. My blood ran cold when I distinctly felt the heels of this vicious animal come in contact with the chest of my poor horse, as one false step must inevitably have brought certain destruction on both horse and rider. Most providentially, however, he proved, in this instance at least, to be of too pacific or too magnanimous a turn of mind to resent the injury from a minor quadruped, so that no evil results fol-

lowed from what threatened at the moment to become so terrible a catastrophe.

Long and precipitous as was the ascent of this lofty mountain, we were amply rewarded for our labour, on reaching the summit, by a scene of such extraordinary grandeur and beauty suddenly opening upon our view, as I have rarely if ever before beheld.

At our feet lay fertile valleys, studded with Arab villages, but appearing mere specks in the distance. Around us were majestic mountains, towering one above the other in wild confusion. Beyond, and losing itself in the hazy distance, stretched away the vast expanse of the bright blue Mediterranean Sea.

Most reluctantly did we turn from the all-surpassing prospect before us, in order to commence our descent on the opposite side of the mountain, by a track, for pathway it can hardly be termed, leading over the

smooth and almost perpendicular rocks, where the feet slipped away at nearly every step. This was to me even worse and more hazardous than the ascent.

After continuing our wearisome course for some time, we came to other equally bare and rocky mountains, covered with loose stones, where not one atom of green of any kind refreshed the jaded eye. Here and there a few dried thistles were the only traces of vegetation that we could discern.

At length we arrived at a narrow barren ravine, a kind of rocky gorge, where the mountains rose precipitously on either side. Here we met with a large drove of goats, which the herdsmen were watering from a well of the purest, coldest, and most crystal of waters.

On a bare and hot rock in this spot we halted, fully exposed to the fierce mid-day sun, for not a speck of shade could be found

in the place. We drank some nice goat's milk, warm from the goat, which, with a scrap of bread nearly as dry as a chip, some hard eggs and preserved fruits, served for our breakfast.

After a brief but most welcome rest, we again mounted our steeds and journeyed on, our route now leading us between two rocky, stony, barren mountains, if possible even more bleak and naked than those we had previously traversed, the savage nature of the place being heightened, too, by its solitude.

'Surely the wildest glen but this can show  
Some touch of nature's genial glow.'

I think this was without exception the most dangerous route I had ever travelled in my life; the descent we had to make was steep in the extreme; there was no regular road or pathway, and frequently we were obliged to dismount and lead our

horses over hard, smooth slabs of stone, on which it was with considerable difficulty we could preserve a footing ourselves.

At such moments as these, how appropriate appear those exhortations of the prophets, to 'prepare the way of the Lord, to make His paths straight; to make straight in the desert a highway for our God.' 'Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain shall be made low; and the crooked places made straight, and the *rough places plain.*'

Dr. Thomson tells us, that when Ibrahim Pasha proposed to visit certain places in the Lebanon, the emeers and sheikhs sent forth a general proclamation, somewhat in the style of Isaiah's exhortation, to all the inhabitants, to assemble along the proposed route, and prepare the way before him. The same, he says, was done in 1845 on a grand scale, when the Sultan visited Brusa : the stones were gathered out, crooked places

straightened, and rough ones made level and smooth. Isaiah says: 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord. Cast up, cast up the highway, gather *out* the stones;' an exhortation which I can fully understand now to be peculiarly appropriate in this land.

These Arab farmers do exactly the reverse—gather up the stones from their fields, and cast them *into* the highway; and it is this barbarous custom which renders the paths in so many parts both most unpleasant and dangerous.

At about 3 P.M. we came to the pretty, picturesque little village of Acoora, or Akurah, by far the most pleasing and the neatest and cleanest village I have seen in these parts. You may imagine how heartily glad I am to find myself at last resting on the terrace of the nice little house of entertainment in which we are to pass the night.

But alas! these Arab women and children,



notwithstanding my fatigue, seem resolved that I shall not enjoy quietly my long wished for repose. According to their usual custom, immediately on our arrival at any place, they are closely crowding around me, —now, whilst I am writing, carefully inspecting and handling the various contents of my saddle-bags. Then approaching nearer, they attempt to take off my rings to look at them ; some are trying my hat on, to see how it becomes them ; whilst others have actually got hold of my hair-brushes, with which, as usual, they are brushing their gowns.

Meanwhile, of course, they are not forgetting to beg for whatever article happens to take their fancy for the moment. This is tiresome, certainly. One would suppose they might naturally imagine that I *must* feel a little exhausted, after so early, long, and toilsome a ride over the mountains ; but the fact is, they are so strong them-

selves, that I doubt whether they really have any idea of the fatigue we feel after a journey of this description.

The Arabs are a most kind-hearted people, and would not intentionally do anything to annoy me. It is, I think, only the poor peasantry who behave in this way. The upper classes, of whom I see at this moment an abundance of visitors around us, are sitting quietly conversing with C. B——, and are most courteous, and even dignified, in their manner.

There is a Maronite chapel immediately facing our terrace, and they are ringing the bells in order to celebrate the return of the governor of the village, and indeed of all this part of the Lebanon: he is termed an emeer or prince here.

You would be amused to see the way in which this bell-ringing is contrived. On the flat roof or terrace of the chapel is constructed a tiny kind of house closely

resembling a watchbox, only there is a cross on the top of it; in this place hangs the bell, and behold a man pushing the bell backwards and forwards most energetically,—hard work it appears to be. Now a small boy climbs up, with the laudable endeavour to assist the senior bell-ringer, but with more speed than politeness he gets his dismissal by a kick.

The village of Acoora lies in the very head of the great valley or Wady El-Mugheiyreh. The end of this valley is completely enclosed or shut in by a lofty transverse wall of rock full 1000 feet high, almost perpendicular, and extending up to the village, so that the latter is situated just under it. In this wall of rock there is a narrow cleft not far from the village, through which the road leads up, and continues over the mountains to Ba'albek. It is said that on this road, about an hour from the village, there are some inscriptions to

be found in the Frank character, but not any in Arabic, I believe.

In Acoora itself we met with no ancient ruins of any kind, though the people here protest there are in the vicinity no less than forty ruins of convents and churches. Acoora was once the seat of a Maronite bishop, and the inhabitants are still, for the most part, if not entirely, of that religious persuasion.

The great Wady El-Mugheiyreh, profoundly deep, rocky, and rugged as it is, appears, nevertheless, rich with fruit-trees and grain, being most carefully cultivated in every accessible spot of earth. Even half-way up the precipice on the east of the village, I am told there is a field of wheat on a terrace of the high rock, which is enclosed by a wall of loose stones. How the Arabs contrive to get their cows up in order to plough it seems a mystery to me, but the cattle of the Lebanon, I

believe, will climb these mountains like goats.

Our evening's repast of stewed chicken, rice, and fried eggs being now ready, we also were prepared to do ample justice to it. Quite a nice little dinner it appeared to us in comparison with our late frugal fare on the mountains; a cup of coffee, too, proved very acceptable. Then, arranging our beds for the night on our pleasant and commodious terrace, we slept most comfortably in the open air.

*Wednesday, September 16.*

In our saddles by break of day, having partaken by lamplight of a hasty breakfast of rice and milk, which had been purposely prepared on the previous evening.

I was full of regrets at leaving this village, so delightfully and picturesquely situated. After descending, and crossing the little brook which issues from the cleft in the

precipice, we kept along close under the lofty wall of rock, which towered 1000 feet above us on our left hand. The ledge running midway along the acclivity which we had to traverse, seemed hardly broad enough for a goat track, whilst far below, at the foot of the almost perpendicular rocks, lay on our right hand the great Wady or Valley El-Mugheiyreh. The prospect was sublime : it

‘Seems that primeval earthquakes’ sway  
Hath rent a strange and shattered way  
Through the rude bosom of the hill ;  
And that each naked precipice,  
Sable ravine, and dark abyss,  
Tells of the outrage still.’

After pursuing our course for about an hour, we found ourselves quite across the valley, in its opposite angle, and approaching some of the most beautiful waterfalls I have ever beheld, gushing out midway from these stupendous rocks, and rushing down into the valley beneath. Between two of these

falls our romantic path led us, and over a rustic bridge, which is thrown across the serpentine brook they form. Beside one of these falls there is a cavern, which we felt a great wish to explore, but we could not stop. Several times, indeed, I felt quite vexed with my party for not giving me time to transfer to paper the glorious picture before me, but by no means could I prevail on them to do so; and as they all insisted on the necessity of pressing on, for me there was no alternative, even amidst this charming scenery, but to submit to their decision. Therefore we proceeded on our way, passing at a greater or less distance many villages in the undulating valley or plateau which slopes down from the base of the steep mountains on each side. The greater part of this is fertile and well cultivated, excepting the central and lowest portion of the terrace, in which is the chasm of the stream, which is in certain places extremely rugged and

narrow, at others considerably broader, and also well tilled and studded with villages.

When opposite the village of Mejdal, the whole valley appears as if completely shut in or enclosed on one side by the lofty mountain from which we had descended, the stream breaking through the rugged western ridge, and running in a south-westerly direction by a deep and wild gorge.

Nearly an hour below Mejdal, but on a higher terrace, is situated the village of El-Mugheiyreh; and after turning to the left, around the angle of the mountain, and entering another somewhat similar valley, appears the village of El-Muneitirah. We are now near the head of the valley, and still surrounded by very lofty and precipitous mountains.

On the opposite terrace the lovely village of Afka is in sight. At Muneitirah, in the rock are two wine-presses, hewn side by side; but we did not observe any vineyards in the immediate vicinity.



At the head of the amphitheatre, there is a road which passes up to the summit of the high ridge north of Es-Sunnin; then forking off, one branch descends to Ba'albek, the other to Zahleh, where Mrs. Thompson has schools. They say that on the road leading up from this valley into the Büká'a are to be found the ruins of a castle, or of some other extensive and important building.

After descending rather steeply for a short time, we reached the angle of the valley in which the stream is formed. Here we found a large though shallow cavern in the wall of rock, at the height of about 150 feet from the bottom of the valley. At the back of this cavern, and not far from the top, there is an aperture or mouth, leading into a still deeper recess, which appeared to penetrate the rock for a very considerable distance; but we had neither the time nor the means for exploring its mysterious depths.

The fall or great fountain of water flows

from the outer cavern, and at the same level of rock there are two other but smaller streams gushing forth ; all three of these rush down into a vast natural basin or reservoir, which is situated full fifty feet below, on the declivity. There is a stone bridge thrown across this reservoir, over which the road passes, and just below the bridge appear in succession three most beautiful and regular falls of water.

At a little distance westward from these, but from the same height, another stream flows down, uniting itself to the rest below the principal falls.

A narrow ravine runs up the precipice towards the south-east, and not far from the falls, from which a rivulet descends ; and across this stream, immediately facing the cavern and falls, but quite at the end of a ridge, are the ruins of an ancient temple, unquestionably those of the celebrated Temple of Venus, at Apheca or Afka, which was de-

stroyed under the direction of the Emperor Constantine. Here again, issuing from beneath the ruins, we find another large fountain. It seems as if an earthquake, or some violent convulsion of nature, had rendered complete the prostration of this heathen temple, and had half-buried and scattered its wreck ; so that it is now hardly possible to form an idea, from the confused and shattered masses of masonry which remain, what might have been the original size or plan of the building.

It is in this romantic and sequestered recess, too, that we discover the principal source of the river Adonis of the ancients. And in this charming spot also, according to heathen mythology, occurred the scene described in the ancient fable respecting Venus and Adonis, when the latter being torn in pieces by a wild boar, it was imagined that ever after his blood at certain seasons tinged the current of the river.

One of our early travellers professes to have been an eye-witness to its astonishing redness, in the month of March, when he visited it. It was stained, however, he presumes, not by the blood of Adonis, but by a kind of red earth, which had been washed into the stream probably by the violence of the late rains.

A quarter of an hour's ride now brings us to the charming village of Aska, which is situated on the upper terrace, and on the very brink of the chasm of the stream.

Around the village there are groves of the finest and most noble walnut trees I have ever seen. Here, too, stands a Syenitic column, which was brought from the ruins of the neighbouring Temple of Venus. We command a fine view of the waterfall, the cavern, the river, the bridge, the ruins; and the *total-ensemble* presents a view of such all-surpassing *sublimity*, that I can hardly find words in which to describe it.

You must picture to yourself the magnificence of the amphitheatre in which we stand,—the wealth of verdure and beauty which lies spread at our feet; the splendid and sparkling cascades gushing forth from such a tremendous height of rock; the loftiness and the precipitous nature of the mountains towering around us, which rise, I believe, scarcely less than 2000 feet above the rich and fertile, though broken and undulating, valley.

In this sweet sequestered nook I feel that I could gladly end my days, as in a peaceful retreat from all the world. 'And by the beauties of the scene beguiled, could pity man's pursuits, and shun his ways;' and though this may not be, often, and with the greatest delight, will memory linger over the spot, as one of the most enchanting and impressive I have ever met with in all my wanderings.

We proceeded on our way,—sometimes

beside gushing waters, in green and fertile vales; sometimes over barren, stony mountains; now scaling almost perpendicular rocks, or descending the steepest, narrowest, and most rugged of paths, where the stones and loose treacherous sand slipped and slid away beneath our feet at almost every step; now winding along the extreme edge of frightfully overhanging precipices, by a track which one would fancy hardly safe for a goat. As we turn, wind round, climb, and descend, it seems as if some magical power must be directing the marvellous combinations of scenery, and varying and enhancing at every step the splendour of the prospect.

Soon after noonday, the greatest marvel of all appeared before our eyes,—a stupendous Natural Bridge, spanning the deep ravine of the Fountain of Milk. This gigantic and almost perfectly formed arch, which nature has thrown across the gulf, forms, even to this day, the bridge for the public

highway, and is the very highest in the land.

We dismounted from our horses, and went about half-way down the rock on the south side, in order to obtain a good view of this majestic bridge. From this point of sight, it appears to be formed of one enormous block of solid stone. And, according to Dr. Thomson, the vast arch is not less than 90 feet thick, the span 157 feet, the breadth from 80 to 140 feet, and the height on the lower side nearly 200 feet. Others make the span 163 feet, and the breadth of roadway 160, the height above the stream 100 feet. I think this difference must arise from its irregularity in parts, and from the measure being taken sometimes whilst the torrent is flowing through, at others when, as at present, the bed of the ravine is dry, at which period, the measure being taken from the *bottom* of the gulf, a higher figure might be produced.

This famous natural bridge is called by the natives Jisr-el-Hajr (stone bridge), or sometimes Jisr-el-Bughâleh. A road from Zahleh crosses it, leading to various parts of the coast. Notwithstanding the colossal proportions of this bridge, it is so situated that a traveller, if not on the look-out for it, might easily pass along the road, and even cross over the bridge, without ever becoming aware of its existence.

There is not a doubt but this marvellous work of nature, if met with elsewhere, and alone, would excite the utmost astonishment, and might be considered one of the *wonders of the world*; but here, where all around is on so grand, so vast, so magnificent a scale, the impression it makes on the mind is less forcible than it otherwise would be.

On the north side of the bridge, the chasm or span is considerably narrower,—not above 75 feet, I believe. Here the arch does not extend through under the whole bridge,



but from this point of sight the roof appears to be of an angular form in the middle. Below the bridge, the rock which traverses the chasm assumes such a variety of architectural shapes and figures, that one is forcibly reminded of a street of gigantic ruins. The fountain of Neba el Leben is a quarter of an hour distant, and higher up ; just under the foot of the ridge, in the south-east, it bursts forth at once, from under the bare and naked rock, where neither trees nor verdure of any kind embellish the scene.

From this source a powerful stream comes foaming and dashing down amongst the ridges and ledges of rock, which in various places cross its channel, wearing and working its way through every impediment, as it pursues its impetuous course, and forming many a chasm of singularly fantastic features. The most remarkable of these, perhaps, occurs immediately above the bridge, where one of these ledges or ridges

of rock is completely cut through by the stream, and has been formed into an exceedingly narrow fissure, the sides of which are almost perpendicular. Near this there is a very broad ledge of rock, the lower part of which presents again the strange appearance of having been cut away and chiselled by the stream into almost perfectly formed columns, pilasters, battlements, and buttresses.

About twenty minutes west of the bridge, situated on a rocky slope, there are some very remarkable ruins scattered about, which are called by the natives Kulat Fukra, but we had not time to visit them.

We are told by Dr. Porter, that there is a square tower here, probably a tomb, the masonry of which is massive, though rude. Two Greek inscriptions have been discovered on it, one containing a date 355, A.D. 43 ; the other is almost illegible, though some have imagined they could decipher the name of

the Emperor Claudius, which would certainly correspond with the date.

But the principal ruins are those of a large temple, which is situated amidst a perfect labyrinth of high rocks. These rocks are cut away to a considerable depth, so as to form a sunk rectangular area. The rocky walls thus formed constitute the sides of the court, the front being of masonry, with a portico of columns; the body of the temple stood farther back among the rocks, and somewhat elevated. It had a portico, apparently, of six Corinthian columns, each 3 feet 9 inches in diameter. Its dimensions are about 100 feet by 50. Near it, in an open field, is a small enclosure, surrounded by enormous stones; one measures 13 feet in length, 3 feet broad, and 1 foot 10 inches thick. There are several other rude enclosures, and a few excavated tombs, in the surrounding cliffs. Farther south are the ruins of a little town, without name or story.

I believe we are now about 4926 Paris feet above the sea, which is even higher than Ehden, yet not anything approaching to the height of Dahar-el-Küdhib, the highest peak above the Cedars, which is at least 9310 English feet above the sea. But we shall soon begin to descend from our elevated position.

Whilst travelling forward, more especially during the noontide heat, I have not unfrequently experienced an overpowering, and, indeed, sometimes perfectly irresistible inclination to sleep stealing over my senses; and on more than one occasion I have actually been fast asleep and dreaming in my saddle, then, on a sudden jerk of the horse, have started from my reverie in surprise, to find myself on the very brink of some fearfully overhanging precipice.

I recollect reading somewhere of the same thing having occurred to Dr. Black, as he was pursuing his journey through the Great

Desert, and that he even fell from his camel during a profound slumber, and sustained so severe an injury that his onward progress was impeded for a considerable length of time.

Throughout the course of my journey my smelling-salts and *eau de Cologne* have been in constant requisition, and have proved of immense service in rousing me; but unfortunately my bottle of the latter was dashed to pieces on the bridge of Afka by our careless muleteer, which at any rate had the effect of rousing my anger, so very essential had I found it.

I am often astonished at the almost incredible distances at which people amongst these mountains talk to each other, and appear to be heard distinctly. They will frequently give the most minute directions across enormous glens and gorges, without one word being either lost or misunderstood. I imagine that from long practice they must

have acquired some peculiar mode of pitching their voices, for they seem to exercise no greater effort in doing this than they would in carrying on their usual conversation, and I believe they really speak very little louder.

It was near sunset before we reached the little Arab hut in which, or rather beside which, we were to pass the night; and here I had an excellent opportunity of watching the whole process of bread-making and baking, according to the most approved Arab fashion. I seated myself by the oven side, and the women kindly handed me, from time to time, portions of the crisp, newly-baked flakes, which proved very acceptable after my long and fatiguing ride.

The oven here was outside the cottage, and appeared to be sunk or built into the ground; in form it closely resembled an exceedingly narrow but deep furnace or boiler, with a cover also, to close it over at the

top in the same manner. I think it is made of a kind of stone, or very hard cement, or both materials intermingled probably; and in order that the thin cakes of bread may more readily adhere to it, the interior is roughened over in some way, so that it looks something like rather coarse, unfinished stucco. The fire by which it is heated is inside and at the bottom of the oven.

After the paste or dough has been properly prepared with leaven, and has remained a sufficient length of time to rise, it is made into small cakes, rolled out on a board, then flattened and spread out still more on a cushion, which is exactly similar in appearance to that used by a lace-maker in England. Thus they work the dough about until it becomes as thin as the very thinnest possible pancake; then, whilst still on the cushion, they dexterously toss or flap it against the roughened sides of the oven, to

which it seems to affix itself easily enough, and is very quickly baked.

When quite new and fresh from the oven, it is very nice, but after it has been kept a short time and gets stale, it becomes extremely tough and leather-like, and is to me most distasteful, though the Arabs seem perfectly content with it even in that state, and consume large quantities of it. They sometimes roll it up into the form of a spoon, with which they dip up their leben or soured milk, and other liquid food; it is also the ordinary accompaniment to their grapes, raisins, halawah, and dibbs: the latter sweet is a kind of syrup, peculiar, I believe, to the East. It is very delicious, and an abundance of it is made here from the juice of the grapes, which is boiled down until it attains both the colour and consistence of honey.

We walked out one afternoon to the press for the preparation of dibbs, only about fif-



teen minutes' walk from Mrs. B——'s house at Bhamdoon.

There were two shallow vats side by side, in which the grapes were pressed ; from these the juice was drawn off into a small channel outside, and conducted into three smaller and deep vats, where it was left to settle and become clear. The juice was then conveyed to a large boiler just below, where it was boiled away to the proper consistence, and then, lastly, it was put to cool in two or three still smaller vats.

It not unfrequently occurs that these vats are excavated in the solid rock, as is the case in the press at Hasbeya.

There is comparatively little wine made here, as the natives are not sufficiently skilful in the management of it ; did they, however, only possess this requisite knowledge, the Lebanon wine would undoubtedly prove very superior.

They prepare a ruby-coloured kind of

spirit, called arack, a very tolerable substitute for brandy, which seems to be in great favour amongst them ; still the Arabs seldom take either arack or wine in sufficient quantities to produce intoxication.

After partaking of a good supper of chicken-broth, eggs, and some of the crisp, newly-baked bread, we repaired to our dormitory, an adjacent shed, at the head of which we found the household sheep tethered ; —such a beautiful young creature ! a snow-white mountain lamb !—

‘ Nor sheep nor kine were near ; the lamb was all  
alone,  
And by a slender cord ’twas tethered to a stone.’

The kind Arab family brought us out some skins of sheep and goats : with these, and the addition of our own blankets, quilts, etc., we contrived to make most comfortable beds ; and here, though in but a roofless shed, I enjoyed an unusually good night’s repose.

*Thursday, 17th September.*

This morning we were considerably delayed, in consequence of having lost a piece of fine Arab cloth, which we had borrowed at Ba'albek ; it had been used on the previous evening, to put on a horse which we sent down to a neighbouring village with a man to purchase barley ; and this man who accompanied the horse, being a stranger, took advantage of the opportunity to steal the cloth, and we found it impossible to recover it.

As we proceeded on our way, we passed several lovely valleys studded over with picturesque little Arab villages :

‘ Nestling in quiet loveliness, girt round  
With spiky cactus or green-spreading olive ;’

and many extensive and beautiful vineyards lay stretched beside our path, from which the kind and generous Arabs offered us an abundant supply of delicious grapes.

But the character of the scenery became tamer and less and less impressive, as we approached Bhamdoon, which is comparatively in the lower regions, being only 3330 feet above the level of the sea.

At about 3 P.M. we arrived at this little village, in which is situated the home of my kind friends the B——'s, having satisfactorily accomplished our programme after an absence of exactly fourteen days.

How thankful ought we to feel for having been preserved from so many dangers, and that no serious misfortune or accident of any kind has occurred to mar our pleasure!

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[APPENDIX.



## APPENDIX.

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*The following is extracted from the writings  
of the Rev. J. L. PORTER.*

'BA'ALBEK is situated in the plain of Būka'a, at the northern end of a low range of bleak hills, about a mile from the base of Anti-Lebanon.

'The magnificence of its ruins has excited the wonder and admiration of every traveller who has been privileged to visit it.

'On the north side of the village is a large mosque in ruins, containing some beautiful columns of granite and porphyry. But the main attractions of Ba'albek are its three Temples.

'The first, which we may call the "Great Temple"—"*ṭṭḥlḥḥ*"—"The Three Stoned," consists of a vast peristyle, 290 feet long and 160 feet broad, of which only 6 columns remain—there were originally 54; two courts, one of which is 440 feet long, 370 feet wide, and a portico 180 feet long by 37 feet deep; all standing on an artificial platform nearly 30 feet high, and having long vaults underneath.

'The second, which we may term, "The Temple of Jupiter," occupies a lower platform of its own, on the south side of the former, and only a few feet distant. A large portion of it is still in good preservation, and it forms by far the most imposing structure in Syria. Its dimensions are 227 feet in length, by 117 in breadth, thus larger than the Parthenon at Athens, and the portico of the Pantheon at Rome.

"The Great Portal," which is the gem of the whole structure even in its present state, as shattered by the earthquake of 1759, is one of the most striking and beautiful gateways in the world.

'The third is the "Circular Temple," which stands alone about 200 yards to the south-east of the others. Though small, and now, alas! sadly dilapidated, it is a *perfect gem*. . . . No description of these ruins can approach the reality. The exquisite proportions of the columns, the elaborate sculptures of the portals, niches, friezes, and lacunari, the accumulated heaps of enormous shafts, gigantic capitals and architraves, that cover the ground, and perhaps more than all, the Cyclopean masonry of the platform, form a group unequalled in the world of Architecture.

'On the side of the hill, near the south-west angle of the city, lie the fragments of a monumental column which was standing till near the close of the past century. Its total height, including pedestal, base, and capital, was 38 feet. It is of Doric order, and

was probably surmounted by a statue. The capital is broad, and pierced by a hole, corresponding to which is a small groove running down the whole shaft, the object of which it is difficult to conjecture. It stood over a sepulchral cave, which is said to have been opened a few years ago by Sir Moses Montefiore. Several sarcophagi were found in the interior.

‘Near this column and on the hill-side above it are many rock tombs. The walls which enclose this section of the city are constructed of old materials, and many of the stones contain fragments of friezes, and cornices richly ornamented, while others have imperfect Greek inscriptions upon them. One of them contains the name of Zenodorus.

‘Half a mile west of these ruins, close to the base of the hills, are the “quarries;” from thence the massive stones used in the construction of the temples, etc. were doubtless obtained. One enormous block remains, ready hewn, but not quite detached, the weight of which would probably be as great as that of one of the tubes of the Britannia Bridge.’

‘As regards the history of Ba'albek—the name, the position, and the inscriptions on the pedestals of the great portico, all concur in proving that this is the Heliopolis of the Coëlesyria or Phœnicia, frequently referred to by early geographers and historians.

‘The name Heliopolis, City of the Sun, probably



a mere Greek translation of Ba'albek, implies that this city, like its namesake in Egypt, was already consecrated to the worship of the sun. Indeed, the sun was one of the chief divinities in the Syrian and Asiatic worship, and to him was applied in their mythology, as well as to Jupiter and some other gods, the name Baal or Lord. The mythology of Egypt had a strong influence on that of Syria, and it would not be unnatural to suppose a connection between the forms of sun worship in the two countries. Indeed, this is expressly affirmed; and Macrobius, in the fifth century, narrates that the image worshipped at Heliopolis in Syria was brought from Heliopolis in Egypt.

'At what period or by whom the city was founded is unknown, but it was probably coeval with the palmy days of Phœnician history. The colossal platform of the temple and the bevelled masonry under the great peristyle point to a Phœnician origin, and we may safely conclude that Ba'albek, "the City of Baal," was one of the "holy places" of that remarkable people, —adopted, renamed, and redecorated, like so many others, by Greeks and Romans in succession. . . . Julius Cæsar made Heliopolis a Roman colony, and during the reign of Augustus it was styled, as we learn from coins, "Col. Julia Augusta Felix Heliopolis."

'In the second century its oracle was in such repute even at Rome, that the Emperor Trajan consulted it previous to his second expedition against the Parthians.



*Duo Ærea Auro Inluminata Sua Pecunia Ex Voto.*" This inscription, therefore, is the written testimonial of a vow made for the health of Antoninus Caracalla, and his mother Julia Domna. As it gives the title divine to the emperor, it was probably executed towards the close of his reign; and as no mention is made of Geta, who was assassinated in A.D. 212, we may safely conclude that the date of the inscription is between the years 212 and 217.

'It appears that the Great Temple was dedicated to all the gods of Heliopolis, Magnis Diis Heliopolitanis, and was thus a kind of Pantheon in which Baal presided. This same Julia Domna, whose name occurs on the inscription as mother of Caracalla, was wife of Septimus Severus, and daughter of Bassianus, priest of the sun at Emesa. The inscriptions show that the temple existed in a perfect state in the reign of Caracalla, and had been erected at least previous to that time. We learn from Macrobius that the Great Temple contained a golden statue of Jupiter, which on festival days was carried about in procession through the streets of the city, something like the images of saints in the cities of the Continent at the present time. Those who carried the idol prepared themselves for the holy service by shaving the head, and vows of chastity. Venus was also one of the deities of Heliopolis.

'In the year A.D. 297, during the reign of Diocletian,







